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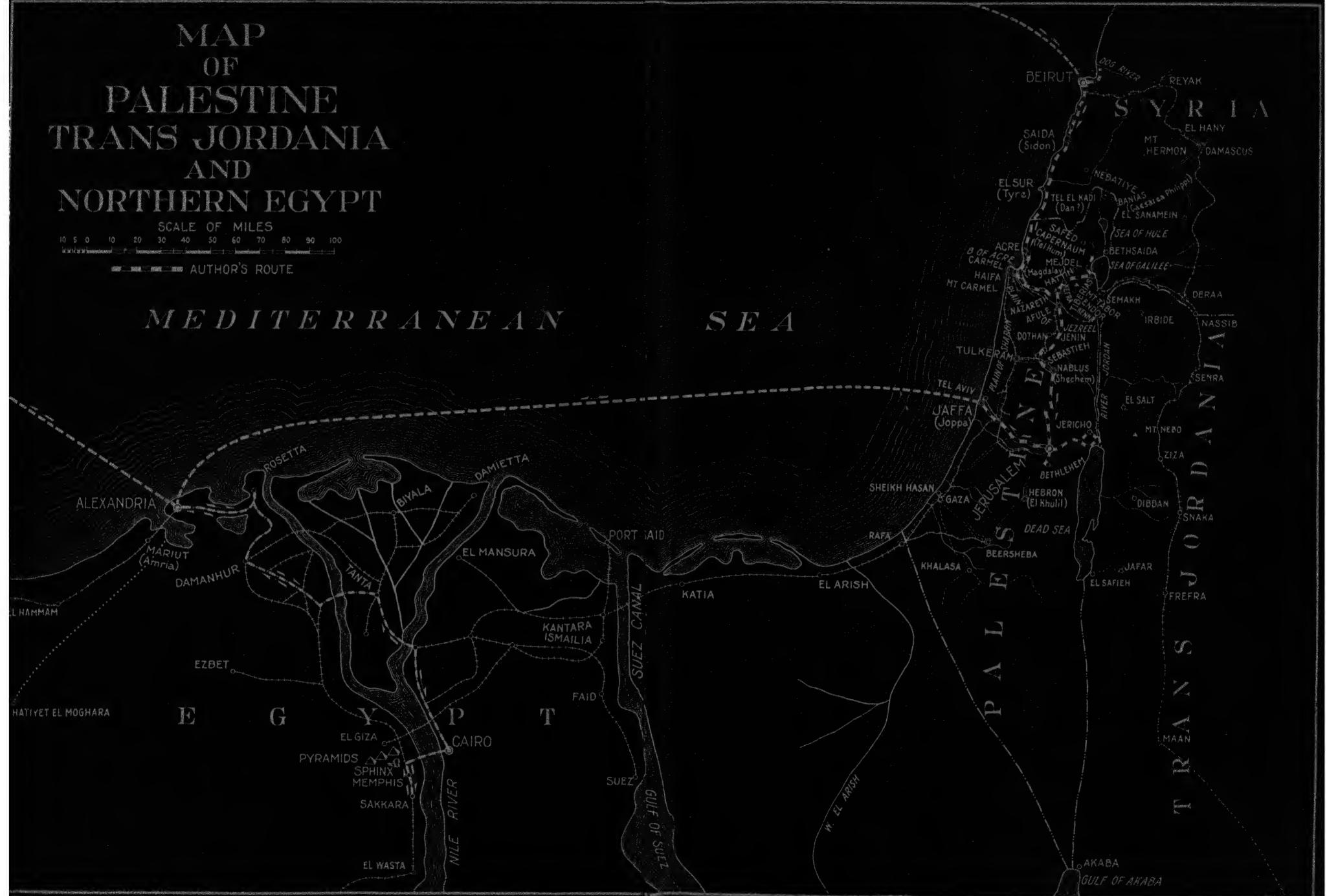
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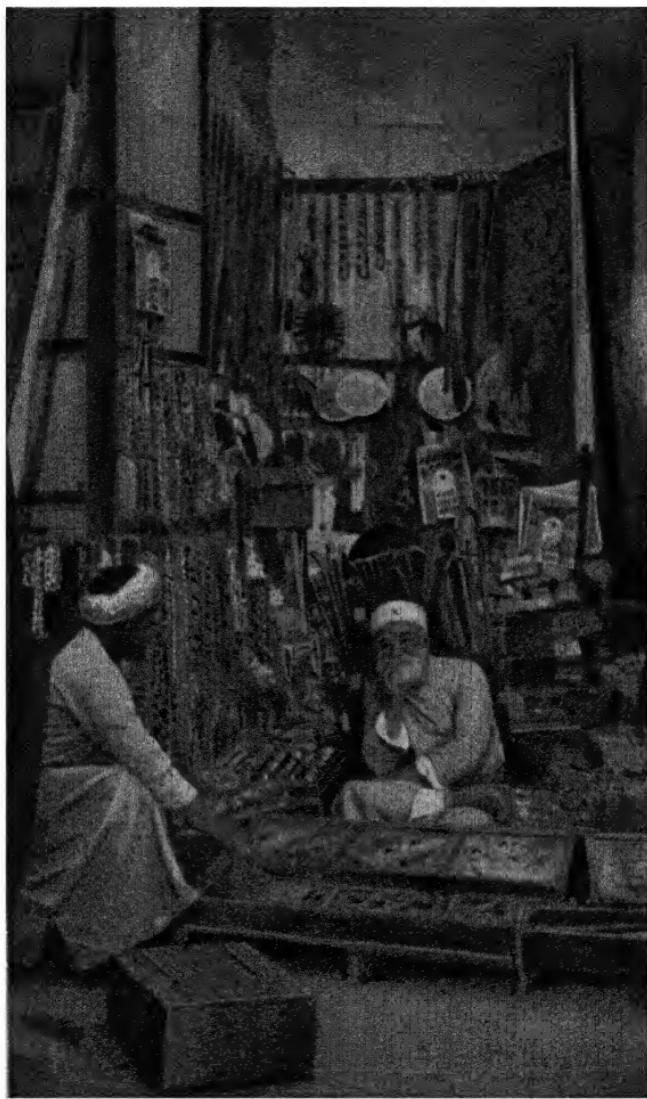
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**THE MERCHANT OF THE
MURISTĀN**
and Other Palestine Folks
A FIRESIDE-TRAVEL BOOK

By MADELEINE SWEENEY MILLER
(MRS. J. LANE MILLER)

IN spite of the enlarging influence of the modern and the western in the life of Palestine there still remain to-day "many types of people with whom Jesus ^{say} was familiar, composite descendants of those who made up his out-of-doors audiences." Mrs. Miller recently had the opportunity of meeting some of these types at close hand, and in this volume she has undertaken the task of sketching a few of them. There is a notable interpretive value in these sketches, for, as Mrs. Miller remarks, "types of people are far safer links with the time of Christ, and infinitely more satisfying than obliterated pavements and disputed walls." And one of these distinctive types that lifts the past into the present is "the Merchant as we met him last summer in his tiny shop in the Mûristân section of Jerusalem."



THE MERCHANT OF THE MÛRISTÂN, JERUS LEM
(See Chapter VIII)

The Merchant of the Mûristân and Other Palestine Folks

A Fireside-Travel Book

By
Madeleine Sweeny Miller

Photographs by J. LANE MILLER



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TO J. LANE MILLER
MY FELLOW-PILGRIM
IN THE PICTURE-PATHS OF PALESTINE
AND IN THOSE
MORE INTIMATE FIRESIDE TRAVELS
WHICH ARE THE
PRIVILEGE OF EVERY HAPPY FAMILY.

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A FOREWORD

IN Bible lands to-day there remain many types of people with whom Jesus was familiar—composite descendants of those who made up his out-of-door audiences. By glimpsing these folks as they pass up and down the old coast of Syrophœnicia, over bleak Judæan hills and fertile Plain of Jezreel, we gain a clearer understanding of the words he addressed to non-plused and uncomprehending ears.

Time and again in Palestine those words of Matthew recurred to us: “Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. . . . Many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not.” It is for the sake of those dear fireside travelers who will never see the Holy Land, save by the eye of faith, that I have undertaken the task of sketching a few of the Palestine types that still persist. It is for them that I have tried to draw the mystic shadows on Galilee’s blue sea; the gorgeousness of star-filled, Christ-filled nights on Nazareth hills; and the romantic complexities that make up the charm of old Jerusalem.

Types of people are far safer links with the time of Christ—and infinitely more satisfying—than obliterated

A FOREWORD

ated palace pavements and disputed walls. Time has "made of a city a heap, of a fortified city a ruin, a palace of strangers to be no city." The two thousand eight hundred and sixty "historical sites" which have already been registered with the Palestine Department of Antiquities for investigation are a burden to the scholar, a torment to the man of faith, and a temptation to the fraudulently inclined.

But the merchant, as we met him last summer in his tiny shop in the Mûristân section of Jerusalem; the good Samaritan, as we passed him jogging along the dusty Jericho road on his tiny ass have something convincingly authoritative about them. Lepers still sun themselves on temple steps and the blind still stretch out their bony hands by the beautiful old gates of the city. In Nazareth we heard a Christian widow tell of thieves on the Wilderness road who had only a few months before stripped her of a life's scant savings. Women with earthen jars and water cans still hold gossipy rendezvous by village wells at sundown, as Rachel was doing when Isaac's camel train arrived.

For there is no virtue in Palestine itself to make it a Holy Land. It is the life of a Man who lived there that sanctified it and beautified it with his presence and miracles that he wrought there. *He* was a Burden-Bearer, a Story-Teller, a Merchant dispensing pearls of great price. *He* played host to wealthy Nicodemus, was a Friend of "the Multitude," a Citizen of Nazareth. In him were many of the native attitudes we

A FOREWORD

shall discuss in the pages that follow. In him centers our chief interest in Palestine. Not in Samaria, not in Jerusalem, in Tyre, or Jericho; not in mountains, plains, or salt Dead Sea, but in a Man who made them worth writing about, is the reward of the pilgrim for his long, long journey to the little bridge of land connecting Egypt with the great northeast hinterland of Asia.

Travel in His Land Incarnates Him.

PILGRIM AUREOLE

Good pilgrims coming home from Mecca wear

A band of green around their turbaned fez;
Kneel more devoutly on their rug of prayer

To meditate on what Mohammed says.

They bow the head in keblah's holy niche
Or count their prayers on amber, golden rich.

So we, returning from Christ's birthplace land,
Wear on our brow a fiery, glowing brand,
For we have climbed the Saviour's Walk, up hills
Of Nazareth when his spirit sweetly fills
The evening air with fragrant sanctity,
Till our perplexities gained clarity
Of stars that stooped to lend their friendly light
And helped us find him in the Nazareth night.

Crusader, pilgrim, priest, and wanderer
In his country whole-heartedly aver
That travel in his land incarnates him,
Makes his whole story leave the page grown dim,
Take shapes that even we may comprehend.

A FOREWORD

Hills leave the Psalms where David planted them;
On Olivet, the winds still soothing send;
And roads still wind that felt his garments' hem.

The Via Dolorosa is a street
We climb to-day, a dark retreat
Of sin and suffering—and Calvary
Is at its end, where on the pious knee
Men mingle many creeds to prove their praise
And even minarets their cries upraise.
Gethsemane's a garden where we pray,
And Bethany still smiles in sunlit way,
The sheep he loved still heed their shepherd's call;
The patient ass still bears the loads of all.

So, we returning from his birthplace land,
Feel on our brow the pilgrim's glowing brand,
For we have climbed the Saviour's Walk, up hills
Of Nazareth when his spirit sweetly fills
The evening air with silent sanctity,
Till our perplexities gained clarity
Of stars that stooped to lend their friendly light
And helped us *find him* in the Nazareth night.

However one feels about the modernizing influences of the Zionist colonies in Palestine, he is faced with the fact that they have already made the land where Jesus lived less picturesque. The "boom town" of Tel Aviv near the seaport of Joppa, with its concrete plant and its homely houses in Western mode, already resembles certain sections of the Jersey "Meadows." None of us would for a moment be so unsocial as to wish the unprivileged citizens of Holy Lands to pay the price of

A FOREWORD

backwardness for the sake of satisfying our hunger for the picturesque. But we do wish to do everything within our power, to crystallize and capture each gleam of light they shed upon Jesus' way and upon the richly packed meaning of his pictures from peasant life.

We would call attention to the two maps which line the book. It is our hope that in connection with the latter chapters our reader will enjoy the unusual one of Jerusalem.

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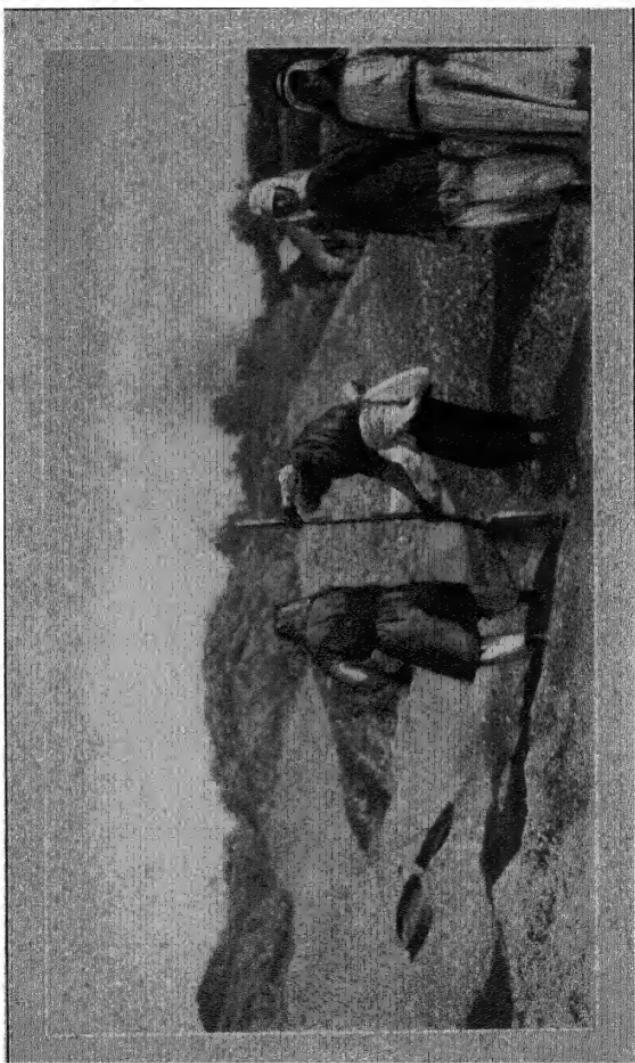
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A PALESTINE PERSPECTIVE

Forgotten are Jerusalem's narrow streets
With caves where poor men buy their fly-flecked meats.
Forgotten are her steps where merchants crowd
Chief priests that walk caparisoned and proud.
Forgotten, puny babies at the breast
Of milkless mothers, seeking stones for rest.
Forgotten, stumbling women under veils
That hold the sweat and dust of passing years.
Forgotten are the temple leper's tears
And blind man's cry, who every passer hails.
Forgotten are our pangs at men who bend
And stagger under loads that will not end.

For as we sail into the hopeful sea,
 A single star looms over Palestine—
The star of Nazareth and of Galilee;
 A single tree finds in our hearts, a shrine—
An ancient olive in Gethsemane!

A SYRIAN THRESHING-FLOOR



CHAPTER I

WINNOWERS IN THE WIND

“Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor.”

MOTORING between Sidon and Tyre on the old Phœnician coast where the “Great Sea” horizons the plain, we came late one afternoon upon a charming idyl of the Syrian summer, a pastoral symphony in blue and gold—ample compensation for any who must be August pilgrims in Holy Lands. On a circular threshing-floor peasants in baggy blouses and ample white head draperies were driving their sand-brown camels round and round or tossing showers of golden grain into the windy blue sky. Lapis waters boomed onto light tan sands bordering a richer brown soil that through the centuries has been pressed between the Lebanons and the Central Range on one side and the pounding surf of the Mediterranean on the other—a lonely land that once delighted in putting forth its galleys and triremes bearing purple wealth to the Pillars of Hercules and beyond.

On the straight beach, unbroken here by villages or even by dunes as at Tyre, wise threshers ages before had selected a level space about one hundred feet in diameter and had paved it with smooth stones. Their strategy had taken advantage of the light breeze which

THE MERCHANT OF THE MURISTĀN

blows in from the Sea at certain dependable hours and makes the time from four to sunset tolerable for laborers and advantageous for nature's winnowing process. For winds have always played a vital part in the life of Palestine—fertile winds bearing life-giving moisture to the leafy heights of Carmel; boisterous east winds which once broke Tyre "in the heart of the seas" and are still tossing shipping in the open merestead at Sidon and Joppa as in the days of Jonah and of Peter, so that the Moslem rowers in Syrian bloomers and scarlet sashes chant in unison to Allah, as they lift their heavy boats past historic reefs; devastating hot Sirocco winds; and gentle winds that bend Jerusalem trees over summer housetops and whisper of Jesus and of Nicodemus and of a wind that "bloweth where it will" and no man knoweth "whence it cometh, and whither it goeth."

Here along the coast road where Jesus may have walked when "He . . . went away into the borders of Tyre and Sidon," diligent threshers presented a picture so lovely that they tempted even our Arab chauffeur, Elias, who had been speeding all the way south from busy Beirut, to slow his car, so that we might rhapsodize over the winnowers in the wind. There were many threshing-floors in Syria that late afternoon, but surely only one where the low sun shot such shafts of its golden self onto glistening grain and bronze-skinned laborers—people pushed seaward by the mountains for their livelihood.

WINNOWERS IN THE WIND

THE POET JESUS

Christ doubtless tarried often to enjoy just such scenes as this. His eye, ever sensitive to beauty, detected and rejoiced in the consummate grace of those loose-garmented arms throwing yellow grain against yellow light, while passing camel trains silhouetted their burdens and their bumps against the purple-im-pregnated sea. Out of such native artistries came his allegories which are still the world's most poetic per-ceptions of Palestine. For nowhere does Jesus show himself more truly the Poet of his people—a greater than David—than in his metaphors of growth. Upon every stage of grain culture he touches, from the sow-ing of the seed, the weeding of tares, the careful over-seeing of the husbandman, the whitening of fields, to the thrusting forth of laborers into the harvest; the winnow-ing and the climax to which all other episodes tend, "Give us day by day our daily bread," which became his supreme symbol, "I am the living bread, . . . and the bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world."

With æsthetic delicacy Christ felt the art made man-ifest when his own people took to their threshing-floors with crude wooden forks and shovels and sifting trays. Little wonder that he made detailed allusions to this seasonal activity. In his day, as now, there was ordi-narily too little work to go around. But when harvest time came "laborers were few" and it was necessary for the "Lord of the harvest" to muster all available

THE MERCHANT OF THE MŪRISTĀN

helpers. Tragedy lurked in the possibility of allowing ripened grain to be lost in a land where bread has never been overplentiful. Fields became alive with moving figures in colorful, floating garb. Then women and children, as in post-war France in our day, went forth with strong men. Elders found tasks with the animals. And every summer in Judæa charming Ruths went forth to glean the grain which had fallen from the bundles of considerate reapers.

John the Baptist too had in his picturesque mind such a scene as was before us when he spoke of the great Winnower “whose fan is in his hand, . . . thoroughly” to “cleanse his threshing-floor; and he will gather his wheat into the garner, the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.” That August afternoon we readily understood how a carelessly cleansed area, rough with débris and with stones upturned by weary hoofs, could cause an ox to stumble on the threshing-floor of Nacon, when Uzziah put forth his hand to steady the ark of the covenant.

It was an elevating experience to come upon all this rustic loveliness after the tedium of waiting to have a broken spring repaired amid the squalor of modern Saida, the degenerate descendant of Sidon, which was once the “stronghold of the Sea.” But the Holy Land is like that everywhere—sharp contrasts of sudden depression and lofty elevation; mountains of Lebanon dropping down to Mediterranean coast-level; peakedness of Tabor falling away to Esdraelon’s plain;

WINNOWERS IN THE WIND

hilltops of Jerusalem, pressed down to the Dead Sea, snows of Hermon defying the heat up-rising from Jericho's burning plain.

ZAREPTA'S FLOOR

Now, an Oriental threshing-floor may be located in a variety of places. It may be on the flat roof of a roomy house built on a sloping hilltop, so that men easily drive their animals and threshing-boards onto it from the roadside. Such an one we came upon in the interesting Moslem village of Deboriah, near Tabor's base. Or, it may be a community affair at the edge of the village, as at Nazareth to-day or in ancient Jerusalem, where David purchased the threshing-floor of Araunah (Ornan), which later became the Temple Area of Zion—a memory which seems reflected long after in the image of Micah, when he exclaimed, "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion."

But here, as with one we passed on a lonely stretch of the Greek Isthmus between Athens and Corinth, the threshing-floor was isolated from villages, just out in the open countryside. Sarafand was the nearest settlement, ancient Zarephath, "which belongeth to Sidon," where the generous widow and her son played host to Elijah in the time of drought. No little degree of joy was added to the scene for us by the possibility of Christ's having himself passed this way. The narrow coastland where we were tarrying constituted "the borders of Tyre" out of which Christ came "through Sidon

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unto the sea of Galilee," after healing the daughter of the persistent Syrophœnician woman. Some scholars like to place this incident near Zarephath (known in New Testament times as Sarepta), which would have had a natural attraction for Christ as the scene of a similar ministry on the part of his great forerunner, Elijah.

Our Elias called attention to its mile of ruins high on the ridge behind us and wished that he had time to show us the evidences of its early importance. He might gather us fragments of glass and pottery pointing to the presence of furnaces which may have given the town its name, "melting liquefying." He could also show us a covered fountain at which, in days of drought, the citizens of Zarephath refreshed themselves. Our parched lips vainly reiterated the words of the prophet, "Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink." Elias the Arab indulged with apparent impunity in long draughts from the germ-laden water pots of the winnowers while we delved into our last steamer basket, whose fruits had been stored on ice for such an hour, all the way from New York to Beirut.

Our charming *compagnon de voyage*—a daughter of the United States consul at Jerusalem who had joined us at Beirut—beamed with satisfaction as she shared our oranges and candied fruits. She had left Constantinople, where she was a teacher in the Women's College, too hurriedly to provide such "Turkish delight."

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Residence in the Near East had taught her to "travel light but right," and she had made no more elaborate preparations for running down from the Bosphorus to Jerusalem for summer vacation than we would for commuting between New York and Philadelphia. Her airy, sleeveless silk gown was in refreshing contrast to the swathed winnowers—looking quite like women—and to our own armor of dust coats, sun helmets, and "Crook's lens" goggles. She was one of America's best types of citizen, whose *savoir faire* put her at ease anywhere in the world. On our subsequent drive through Samaria into Judæa she was to enrich us greatly by her knowledge of the land, its people, its fruits, and her pictures of the gay beauty of a spring whose Elysian loveliness our Occidental eyes were powerless to visualize, as we looked on the sepia sameness of its summer color-tones. She and Elias, whose Arabic tongue and temper she so well understood, were to lend added eyes to our limited powers of perception.

MODERN PATRIARCHS

We were interested in the crude tents which the harvesters had set up near the sea—not the black tents of the Bedouin but delightfully improvised affairs suggesting a relished return to patriarchal manners, which delighted these rustic Syrians as much as summer camping experiences elate American city boys. The gathering together of threshers under conditions of excessive exertion and intense summer heat entails such

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moral perils as Boaz was aware of when he advised Ruth, "Abide here fast by my maidens," saying, "Have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee?"

For women form a necessary part of the winnowers' group. Upon them depends the preparation of the coarse native food loved by every Palestinian—flat loaves of unleavened bread, eggplant fried in heavy grease—perhaps lamb's fat—with egg or tomatoes. At the moment we alighted from our car a graceful young woman was returning from the water's edge, where she had been cleansing with Mediterranean brine a huge shallow copper bowl. We wondered whether she would be able to offer the men a "savory" feast such as Isaac loved. There was little evidence of this woman's having prepared kid or venison such as Rebekah furnished from secular Esau's hunt. More probably, out of her poverty, she had been mixing meal for Syrian loaves, to bake on a sheet of metal set up on stones over a pile of charcoal along the shore—such a fire of coals as the resurrected Jesus made for the hungry disciples along the Sea of Galilee.

In so many respects the little land of Syria molds the habits of its people. We found that we could tell the hour of day with a fair degree of accuracy just from the occupation of folks. Who can ever forget the sense of *noon-emptiness* that comes over every Syrian town when business is suspended, streets lie deserted, and the people retire indoors for their siesta and

WINNOWERS IN THE WIND

light food? If we should tell a native that such and such a thing occurred "at the time that women go out to draw water," he would understand what we meant as perfectly as those first readers of Genesis understood from this phrase the hour when Isaac's servant reached the city of Nahor with jewels for fair Rebekah. And here on the northern coast were people winnowing at the hour which has been historic since the day when Naomi said to Ruth down in Bethlehem, "Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor"—to-night referring, probably, not to the dark hours but to those comfortable ones just before twilight. And perhaps our winnowers, after relishing the woman's dish, would follow the tradition of the Bethlehemite, and, like Boaz when he "had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry," would lie down to rest at the end of their heaps of grain, which were towering higher and higher as we stood there watching.

The animals who drag the threshing-board lend always to the interest of the scene. Oxen, asses, camels, and even sheep are used. Seldom east of Corinth did we see horses put to such use. The few steeds we met at all were handsome creatures mounted by Arab sheiks careening through the streets of Jenîn or Tiberias; or by native police, patrolling the wilderness roads of Judæa. Isaiah had a mind for these patient helpers of man when he spoke of a day coming when their pastures would be *large* and "the oxen likewise and the young asses . . . shall eat savory provender, which hath

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been winnowed with the shovel and the fork." But the day of "large pastures" seems not to have come yet to Syria; and the camels from our threshing-floor were content to bend their long necks to the dry grain as they rested from their dizzy rounds.

Elias turned over one of the idle threshing-boards to show us what a primitive thing it is.

"In earliest days," he explained in measured English, "just the animals trod the grain with their hoofs. This hurt too much the grain heads. So a sled or flat board was made, with teeth of stones or iron fastened to its lower side. On this we stand and drive the animals around. It is our Syrian merry-go-round," he laughed, and then without any irrelevancy quoted Isaiah's picture of Israel, as "a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth," which would "thresh the mountains and beat them small, and . . . make the hills as chaff."

"You may think this is falsehood, to speak of threshing mountains," he explained. "But here in Syria, we understand our writers. It is the *idea* they want us to get, not dull literalness. For Mark's words, 'all the city' was gathered together at the door, in Capernaum, you westerners would just say, 'a great crowd.'"

We agreed that such delightful hyperbole was doubtless a glorious tonic to discouraged Israel.

Long we tarried, watching the men with wooden forks and shovels toss the grain high into the breeze, with the wind carrying away the chaff just as it did the

WINNOWERS IN THE WIND

psalmist's light-weight man of evil. "The wicked . . . are like the chaff which the wind bloweth away." Can you see it blowing against the sky in our picture? Other laborers, with wide shallow trays, were making it clear to us where Isaiah got his notion about sifting "the nations with the sieve of destruction."

"WEST IS WEST"

We tried to picture to Elias what a threshing scene in mid-western America is like, with a pulsating machine drawn up outside a tremendous barn—a machine whose almost human mechanism, combines within its complicated self all the functions of the various men engaged before us. He could not believe that such a device could separate the grain, sift the light matter and thistle heads, elevate the roughly dressed grain to the top of the machine, shoot the straw through a fan-blast delivery pipe and stack it with one part of itself, while another was automatically weighing the bushels threshed and delivering them into the farmer's box wagon or waiting sacks. In Nazareth, however, he had seen some modern American farm implements at the orphanage of the Near East Relief.

Every step that had gone before the winnowing by the wind had been primitive also. A strong man with a pair of sturdy oxen hitched to a crooked stick had gone up and down for days, plowing with no regard for waste of power. Hand sickles had cut the grain and reapers had bound the sheaves by hand. Our minds

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went back to the various rustic interludes in the drama of the Syrian harvest.

WHERE CHRIST FOUND HIS PARABLE

In Esdraelon we would soon see such a plain as may well have suggested the parable of the sower to Christ as he walked from his boyhood home at Nazareth to the traditional mount of his transfiguration. So that when he was forced by thronging hearers to take a boat on Galilee for pulpit, the beautiful picture of Esdraelon fields recurred to him. This ample level space at the foot of abruptly rising Galilæan hills, rich with the washed-down strength of the ancient mountains, sprawls with a wild shagginess which is being tamed more and more to-day by enterprising Zionist agricultural colonies. Fields contended for by the phalanxes of the centuries are now being debated by the farmers of antagonistic races, Arab and Jew.

Roads here are a matter of the will, for camels and motors alike turn off the historic Jerusalem-Nazareth highway wherever a cut grainfield allows passage. Nowhere on earth is there a better prototype of valley—it seems the Platonic absolute of all that a plain should be. Here flourish coarse grasses and prickly herbs, dear to the palate of camels. Royal purple thistles are here, side by side with choicest wheat. Through seas of sesame paths run informally. Here are the rocky places, here the good soil, there the wayside places along the road—all but the fowls of the air that devoured the seed, for

WINNOWERS IN THE WIND

birds are rare in Palestine's August. Cruel thorns are here, as well; thorns which cry of Calvary and make one's heart sing with Watts,

"No more let sin and sorrow grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground.

"He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love.

"Joy to the world! The Saviour reigns,
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy."

Esdraelon too would help us visualize definitely those captivating phrases of Matthew wherein he sketches one of the world's most charming pictures of our Saviour: "At that season Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields." The plea of the unpoetic Pharisees for Sabbath observance is aside the point; for we see Jesus only, "*Lord of the living harvest,*" with the golden glory of his native Galilæan sunlight crowning his ever-transfigured head, as he moves with his companions among the shimmering grain of Armageddon.

Elias at last reminded us that we must be speeding toward Tyre and Acre if we would not be overtaken by night on the lonely coast road—a road where within

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a fortnight Americans had been waylaid and had by their temerity embarrassed French officials who were trying to keep their Syrian mandate as orderly as their British brothers were across the southern border in Palestine. We had no desire to be carried away like chaff of the summer threshing-floor!

So Elias made a sudden dash up onto the highway, narrowly avoiding a head-on collision with a superb touring car which passed north at the moment, filled with a white-garmented Egyptian cotton owner and his numerous family, bound from the hot Nile Delta to the cool Lebanons for the season. The incident gave occasion to the consul's daughter for denouncing Elias in explosions of Arabic so expressive that we felt our safety guaranteed for the rest of the journey to Jerusalem.





A KEEPER OF FLOCKS AT THE DOG RIVER

CHAPTER II

A GOOD SHEPHERD

“He leadeth me beside still waters.”

IT is not hard to understand why a Syrian shepherd loves his sheep and is willing to lay down his life for them. Their long, shaggy fleece of sandy-tan is much more appealing than the soiled-white of curly-haired Western sheep. One longs to lose his fingertips among the deep pile of their soft caramel coat. There is something about their innocent helplessness that calls out such affection as a child feels for his little toy lamb with wooden legs.

BETWEEN RIVER AND OPEN SEA

The first Syrian shepherd one comes upon is always memorable, just as his first camel-train and first threshing-floor are. And we deemed ourselves doubly fortunate to chance upon our first “pastorale” along the Highway of the Conquerors at the Dog River in northern Syria, on the old Tripoli Road. The stream pouring down from two lofty caves, “Milk” and “Honey,” cuts its way here between bold mountains of the Lebanon Range and makes its way out into the Mediterranean, a vast blue reservoir of health and riches,

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dazzling in the August sunlight. Along the shoulder of the southern cliff runs a road which has been a strategic military pass since the dawn of history. Inscriptions have been crudely cut in the rocky wall by conquering hosts who have passed this way, from the days of Rameses II, who reigned thirteen hundred years before Christ, on through the martial adventures of Persia, Babylon, Greece, Rome, Western Europe, Turkey, to Napoleon's expedition in 1860 and down to the last war, which added its record: "The British mounted corps, aided by the Arab forces of King Hussan, captured Damascus and Aleppo, 1918."

Just as we turned from photographing some of the most interesting of these inscriptions we noticed a comely flock of sheep and goats resting on a very narrow strip of pebbly sand, washed on one edge by the sweet waters of the river, and on the other by the bounding surf of the open sea. What a thrilling contrast we felt between the peaceful little creatures at our feet and the war-charged atmosphere of their environment! Here they were, *the very symbol of peace, resting in the shadow of the world's war-road!* Again, it was one of those sharp, poignant contrasts which the East has a way of accentuating.

But where was the good shepherd who had made them to lie down by these still waters, so rare to find in the season of Syrian draught? To whom belonged this woolly wealth? A good shepherd never leaves his flock.

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“He that keepeth Israel
Will neither slumber nor sleep,”

cried the psalmist. When the prophet Nahum wanted to depict the sum total of woe before the destruction of Nineveh, he wailed, “Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria.”

And when the jealous elder brothers of David tried to “get something on” the lad when he went down to see how they were faring in their battle against the Philistines, they flung at him the cutting question, “With whom hast thou left those few sheep?”

Nothing could be more pitiable than “sheep without a shepherd,” we said among ourselves. And then suddenly we became aware of a roguish, bronzed face looking up at us from the cool shadows under the bridge, laughing so that his white teeth gleamed under his picturesque “kaffiyeh,” fluttering from his head under its rings of goat’s hair. He was relaxing in the drowsy noon-day heat for a “siesta” but his eyes were on the sheep, whose hot little bodies were resting against the wet stones. A very domestic ram and his mate made their way together to the water’s edge to drink. Others buried their weary heads in the shadows cast by their fellows. The whole scene was a dramatic enactment of those Old Testament lines: “I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord Jehovah.” “I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses.”

What a rare “table” this wise shepherd had prepared

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for them in the presence of their enemies of sun and thirst and draught and footsore weariness! Here on one hand was the healing of salt water for bruised faces and on the other the refreshing of sweet water from cool caves. Surely, the good shepherd had led them in righteous paths.

An alert shepherd is wary in all matters. As this one saw us pointing our lens at his flock, he bestirred himself and extended his brown hand with peremptory requests for "baksheesh." Once these were forthcoming, he indicated to us safe rocks by which we could descend to the shore for better pictures. My Fellow Pilgrim patted him on the back in a friendly greeting for his courtesy, and the shepherd, not to be outdone in cordiality, naïvely returned the pat. For shepherds are a friendly lot.

SHEPHERD WAYS MADE REAL

In the next few moments we saw exemplified in the little flock which had been so well led to these "still waters," restoring the soul and furnishing a brimming cup for thirsty ones, many of the characteristics of all shepherd life in Holy Lands. There were goats among the sheep, brown goats, with long silken ears; goats which reminded us of the words of Christ: "Before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." We wondered why

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this distinction was made against the poor goats, for they are very useful to natives of Palestine, furnishing them with warm coats against rainy weather, with milk for their food, with hair from which curtains and garments and pillows are made, and with savory meat such as Isaac loved. The color-contrast they furnished in the scene before us was pleasing, as their rich brown stood out among the bisque color of the sheep and the black of the round-horned rams. Ever since the time when Jacob made his bargain with Laban in Genesis days, black sheep and "speckled and spotted goats" have been herded with the flock.

"Give them your call. Rouse them up. We want to see if Palestine sheep really do heed their shepherd's voice," we indicated to our new friend.

So lifting his rod high in the air, he began one of the weirdest desert-cries we had ever heard, more stirring than the muezzin's in Constantinople. It started with a sort of swishing sound in his mouth, which developed into an emphatic "Ho, ho, ho!", which immediately set us to thinking of Isaiah's "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." The final measure of the cry became a wild yell, echoing the wilderness-tones of Jacob and of Laban. Immediately the majority of the sheep rose and began to follow the shepherd, who with graceful stride, swung along the sandbar. What a scene it was—a shepherd "pastorale" amid the symphony of booming sea, with the lapis blue of the Mediterranean, the still-green of the river and the

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cedar-brown of the Lebanon Ridge for its “wings.” Had ever a sacred drama more perfect setting than this?

Unlike the Scotch shepherd, who follows with his collie dog driving the sheep and watching them, the Syrian goes on before. It was just such a scene as was often enjoyed by Him who said, “The sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and he leadeth them out. When he hath put forth all his own, he goeth before them and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice.” Later we tried to imitate the shepherd’s call, but not a single sheep so much as looked in our direction or budged a foot. For, as Jesus wisely remarked, “A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.”

Some of the sheep refused at first to obey even their own shepherd’s voice. They continued to lie in the cool sands while their comrades scrambled obediently to their feet. In the picture at the end of this chapter some of them can be seen with their round fat little backs turned squarely on their leader, as in the lines of the hymn,

“I would not heed the shepherd’s voice,
I would not heed his call.”

Finally, the shepherd seized the most unruly one between his legs and with uplifted rod, held him in the path he should follow, while we secured a picture of the one who “would not be controlled.”

One must not think, however, that the function of

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the rod is to force the sheep into submission. Often a small pebble shot from the shepherd's sling is sufficient to attract a straggler's attention. The rod is carried rather to ward off prowling enemies, such as jackals, or foxes, or the wild dogs which infest the land. Often it is barbed with nails until it becomes a formidable weapon of defense. For grazing lands in the mountains of Syria and Judæa are often lonely wildernesses where the shepherd is all in all to his helpless flock. The rod is also useful in counting the sheep, as they pass under it into the fold.

A GOOD SHEPHERD (see illustration, page 36).

Before long we were joined by an older shepherd, whose kindly face with bronze beard and deep-set eyes, made us instinctively think of him as "a good shepherd." He was just such an one who would "gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom, *and* will gently lead those that have their young." His sun-burned neck and bosom showed under his loosened garments, and we could easily picture him with a wee lamb snuggled up close against his skin. His office was to walk behind the flock to gather up the stragglers, while the head shepherd led the way. His "aba" or outer garment was quite ragged but still carried the popular stripes of black, made from the undyed yarn woven in one piece, like the seamless garment of Christ. The patriarchal old shepherd wore native Syrian trousers, so baggy that the seat extended almost to his ankles—

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a comfortable provision for this hot climate. In the folds of his inner coat, he had room for his favorite food: little round flat loaves of Syrian bread, a handful of olives from the hillside, and a morsel of cheese. It is impractical for shepherds to have elaborate food or meals at regular intervals. They eat at random or when they can. They are generally gaunt and ascetic and find it more comfortable to be so. The old shepherd in the chapter-frontispiece is examining his first piece of chewing-gum, which we offered him as "bak-sheesh" for his picture.

Sometimes a group of shepherds graze their flocks together, for the sake of company and protection. Sometimes they own the sheep, and again they are employed by several peasants to keep watch over a community flock. Christ promptly recognized the difference in attitude between the owner-shepherd and the servant, when he said: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep. He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them, . . . and careth not for the sheep."

FEW RACHELS TO-DAY

Nowhere in modern Palestine did we meet the counterpart of Rachel, who "came with her father's sheep; for she kept them." What a beautiful picture she must have made for Jacob when he reached "the

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land of the children of the East”! “And he looked, and, behold, a well in the field, and, lo, three flocks of sheep lying there by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: . . . And they said . . . behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.”

Women are to-day seldom assigned the task of shepherdess.

Frequently a village family of modest means owns but one sheep at a time—a sort of pet sheep, the companion and playmate of the children, like “Mary’s little lamb.” Beside Jacob’s Well at old Sychar, where Jesus had his conversation with the Samaritan woman, we saw one such, in charge of a beautiful young Christian girl. Its fleece was extraordinarily long and of purest white. It was of the “fat-tail variety,” with a great wide pad of woolliness hanging from its spine. When such sheep are well fattened, this mass of marrow-like substance grows to great weight and supplies the favorite fat of Arab cooks, who like it better than butter.

While we chatted with this pure maiden on the site made famous by one of ill repute, in the shadow of Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, another picture came before us of a scene between Nathan and David. The old prophet very cleverly attempted to stir the conscience of the king who had once been shepherd of flocks, by telling the pitiful story of the rich man who “had exceeding many flocks and herds” and the poor man who “had nothing, save one little ewe lamb; which

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he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his own bosom. . . . And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, . . . but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man." We could easily understand how the resentment of David was kindled against such injustice as this, so that he declared to Nathan, "The man that hath done this is worthy to die." It was only after drawing this dramatic picture from shepherd life as David had experienced it on the hills of Judæa, that the prophet made bold to declare, "Thou art the man!"

A SHEPHERD-POET

Often it is the youngest son of a family who is selected to care for the sheep. Such was the case with David, the sixth son of Jesse, who took the three eldest boys off to war with him. What wonders the young lad must have observed in those free hours in the open lands of Judea and on the long walk he made so often between Saul's palace and his father's home at Bethlehem. For after the youth had been summoned to play his harp before the old king, he continued to go "to and fro from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem."

The beautiful thoughts which occur to the retentive minds of boys often leap out to expression in years of their maturity. And in many an exquisite psalm we see reflected the experiences of David's shepherd's

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years, when he felt what it was to be brought up “out of the miry clay,” to have his feet set upon a rock and “a new song” put in his mouth. It was a boyhood memory of choking dust along the hard wilderness road that made the man cry out,

“My soul thirsteth for thee, . . .
In a dry and weary land, where no water is.”

His poetic eyes were quick to appreciate

“. . . the light of the morning, when the sun riseth,
A morning without clouds,
When the tender grass *springeth* out of the earth,
Through clear shining after rain.”

We may be sure that while David watched his flocks, his heart was already practising the praise of the Lord:

“Praise ye him, sun and moon:
Praise him, all ye stars of light, . . .
Mountains and all hills,
Beasts and all cattle, . . .”

But not all shepherds of Palestine are poets. They have their share of roysterers and jesting spirits, like the ones represented by crude comedians in early English mystery plays. Often I have wondered about the religion of shepherds. The nature of their work makes worship habits irregular. Yet of old they seemed men of rugged faith, as we gather from Jeremiah’s complaint against the faithless ones: “The shepherds are become bruitish, and have not inquired of Jehovah: therefore they have not prospered, and all their flocks

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are scattered." How else, unless they were of spiritual bent, could the Bethlehem shepherds have "returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen"? The modern farmer, with eye fixed upon the administration and mechanics of his project, too often turns pessimist. But there is something about the ministry of those who actually tend the animals which gives them an understanding of a God who also cares for his creatures.

Just such a lad as David we met on the road to Bethlehem, diligently trying to lead his sheep into the "green pastures" which are scarcely to be found in summer on the stony hillsides of Judæa. The only way a shepherd can "restore their soul" when the wadies are completely dry is to lead them to familiar wells, such as the Apostles' on the way to Bethlehem, and dip up draughts with his bowl, so that their "cup runneth over."

A LOST SHEEP

Nothing can exceed the tragedy of the lost sheep. It is almost as bad as the panic of a child who is separated from his mother in a great crowd. From a roadside above little Bethany we watched one such scene, enacted on a stony slope above us. Etched against the bare, brown height the shaggy flock made its way, up, up, following the shepherd in hope of food. We noticed one little sheep loitering behind the rest. Farther and farther behind he strayed, apparently without any-

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one noticing him. It was all that we could do to refrain from shouting to the shepherd: "Look, see! Your sheep is getting lost. Turn and find him." For the round rocks and prickly brambles so camouflaged his plump body that he was fast becoming indistinguishable. But we felt that before long, the shepherd would take stock of his flock, and if so much as this little one was missing, he would "go to the desert to find his sheep." If the brambles had torn his face and scratched his legs, he would "anoint" them with comforting oil.

Never would we need any further exposition of those words in Peter's first letter: "Ye were going astray like sheep; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."

CHRIST, THE SHEPHERD

There is no evidence of Christ's having had any actual shepherd experience, save by observation, even in his Nazareth years. But that he was conscious of the shepherd-blood of David in his veins and of the familiarity of his hearers with the details of shepherd life, is indicated by his frequent references to the flock. One of his Galilæan synagogue sermons is recorded only for the sake of preserving his lesson from the sheep who fell into a pit on the Sabbath day. And when he wanted to explain his mission to a woman of the Phœnician border, he spoke of his search for "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He made wrangling disciples realize their whole duty by his simple story of the sheep which

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became lost from the ninety and nine. And in his post-resurrection conversation with Peter he used the imagery of the shepherd in order that his wavering follower might have no possible doubt as to his duty in feeding the sheep and tending the lambs of the new church that was to be born.

WATCHING FLOCKS BY NIGHT

The good shepherd has several alternatives for lodging his sheep at night.

The hills of the land are full of caves—some of them natural, some of them old rock-hewn sepulchers. Many of these are large enough to shelter good-sized flocks and to make it easy for the shepherd to protect them. In the mild seasons of the year the shepherd leads the sheep to open-air folds, with the good shepherd as the only “door” in the crude stone wall.

In some peasant villages houses are built with a mezzanine floor, the animals being accommodated below and the family above.

But when nights are soft and the skies star-filled, shepherds “watch their flocks by night” in open fields. Such was the case with those fortunate ones of Bethlehem who from the low ground still shown as “The Field of the Shepherds,” looked up to the hills where the little town lay sleeping on that night of nights, “and the glory of the Lord shone around about them: and they were sore afraid.”

From the place where their peaceful flocks were huddled

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dled they could see the silhouette of the khan on the edge of Bethlehem and other buildings massed darkly against the jeweled sky. And whatever we feel about the authenticity of the site of the present Church of the Nativity, we like to think that the grotto where Christ was born was on some hillside looking down to the rich plain where those peaceful little creatures lay, which gave to John the Baptist and to us, our favorite symbol of *him*: "Behold the Lamb of God!"



CHAPTER III

CITIZENS OF NAZARETH

"When he came into Galilee, the Galilæans received him."

CITIZENS of Nazareth are a privileged lot. And so they were in the day of Joseph and Mary and Jesus. The Galilæan atmosphere of rustic wholesomeness and hospitality was one to which they returned gladly after their discomförting experience at the Bethlehem inn; in the unfamiliar remoteness of Egypt and in the certain hostility of a new ruler at Jerusalem.

The most sweet town of Nazareth is pleasant to come upon to-day, especially if one arrives in the late afternoon when a merciful breeze is blowing east from the Mediterranean, setting myriads of shadows to dancing upon the white house walls, flat-roofed and substantially set among olive orchards and fig trees and stout hedges of fruited cactus which give summer verdure to the hills of lower Galilee.

If Jerusalem offered an appropriate setting for the tragic hours of Christ's later life, Nazareth provided an harmonious background for the joyous lyric years of his developing idealism. For the one hilltop from

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which his hostile townsmen sought to "throw him down headlong" there were a dozen others whose associations were of happy experiences, walking with boys of Nazareth, playing their games, exploring their caves, learning their natures, and yet dreaming his own dreams for the world which came to later expression on sea-shore and mountainside.

And even in the casting of him forth, denied of an honor in the bestowing of which they would have honored themselves, the citizens of Nazareth simply precipitated him headlong into the richness of his versatile ministry along the shores of Gennesaret and in the uttermost parts of Galilee and Judæa and beyond. The Mountain of Precipitation pointed out to-day on the edge of Nazareth above Esdraelon as the traditional site of his expulsion became a spring board from which he bounded to the greatest experience of altruistic service the world has ever seen. He, "passing through the midst of them, went his way," perhaps taking shelter in one of the very caves he had come to know as a lad at play.

IN JOYOUS GALILEE

Citizens of Nazareth are happy folks. And with reason. The surrounding countryside gives them tolerable assurance of a livelihood. Idlers are far less numerous in their streets than in Nâblus, Sidon, and a score of other Moslem towns where strong men stand gossiping at food stalls or wayside cafés. Nazareth people are not a colony of carpenters, like the peasants of

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Tyrolean villages. They are farm folks. Gardening and the raising of cattle and grain flourish in the community. The busy August threshing-floor we passed on our way into the town was a good index of its prosperity and diligence. Something akin to the friendly little farm-lands of central England is here in the rustic uplands of Galilee which measure just about the size of an average English shire, fifty miles north and south, by twenty-five or thirty east and west.

This section impinges upon the historic fertility of Esdraelon's plain, rolling out vast carpets of living green which one's imagination sees fertilized by the bone-dust of phalanxes who through the centuries from Abram to Allenby have staged here their panoply of fight. Citizens of Nazareth, therefore, escape the depression that comes to Jerusalem people from the realization that just outside their city walls are wilderness wastes threatening a death of everything—life, food, water, prosperity, joy. Nazareth has no sense of wolves lurking outside the circle of her hearth-fires. No deserts border Nazareth. The resources of Galilee keep her happy in the sunny heart of "His own country."

Her citizens find cheer, too, in the goodly numbers of their population. Eleven thousand souls make Nazareth no mean town of the province. It probably has never been more flourishing, in its simple way, than to-day. The daily comings and goings of its own citizens and its many sojourners who feel safe along friendly roads, are reminiscent of the days when frequently,

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"a great multitude came together, and they of every city resorted unto him." Palestinian life is at its best here. Folks are on the *qui vive*, enjoying all who pass by, over the short cross-country route to the alluring Gardens of Damascus; down the great central artery to Egypt; west to the silver coasts of Sidon and old Phœnicia; or east to the Decapolis. If Nazareth itself was reckoned to be of no distinction in the Roman Empire, so that her citizens were branded with derision, much as the "Pennsylvania Dutch" are to-day for their colloquialisms, they certainly had enough broadening contacts with travelers to make them universal-minded, as Christ himself was. Not only were there entrancing panoramas from Nazareth hills looking west to the Mediterranean and east to Jordan, or down to Esdraelon with its twenty battlefields, but it was the almost daily experience of Jesus to be wakened by the merry-mouthing tinkling of camel bells from Damascus and Midian; the dusty-throated braying of overladen asses; and the happy shouts of boys greeting the day with exuberance of health. Retinues of Roman dignitaries marched over neighboring highways, as did processions of Passover pilgrims *en route* to Jerusalem.

Much cheer arises also from the fact that many citizens of Nazareth are Christians—Latin and Orthodox. Whether we can credit this to the efforts of missionaries who have planted not only churches but hospitals and orphanages here, or to biological currents of influence from days when twelfth-century crusaders restored the

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basilica inspired by Constantine and transferred the See of Scythopolis here, it seems one of those happy providences of history that Nazareth to-day should be both Christian and cosmopolitan, a living monument to Him whose life has permeated every corner of the world whether it has honored him or cast him forth from unfriendly precipices.

The sweet, friendly faces of Nazareth women, wearing their dark abundant hair in long braids down their backs, unconcealed by Moslem veil or ample head-draperies of the Hebrew women; their comfortable bare feet treading the soft roadside dust; their long, full dresses free-flowing, speak an absence of restraint and an almost Greek love of life in the open, a sense of abundance, a balanced freedom, and ampleness of movement. Perhaps they have caught from his own city some of the very joyousness of Christ, who came that "their joy might be made full." Their winsome smiles, as they stand at the inn door offering star-shaped doilies of spidery lace, the fruits of their thrifty leisure not to be found anywhere else, are irresistible to everyone who has a few piasters in his purse.

NAZARETH SUNSHINE

Sauntering one day along the outskirts of the town, we came upon one whom we instantly christened "Nazareth Sunshine." She was by all odds the most beautiful Palestinian woman we had yet chanced upon, a colorful crown to the head of any man. Even our com-

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panion, the Jerusalem consul's daughter, exclaimed : "Oh, the *charming* creature! *Isn't* she lovely!" Although she knew no word of English, our Nazareth Sunshine beamed assent to our admiration. For, without being at all bold, she had a sophisticated awareness of her own beauty. As soon as she heard our kodak click, she held out her sunburned hand—no, not for "baksheesh." Oh, no, not she! But for a finished counterpart of her own loveliness, which she thought should be immediately available for her pains in posing.

Her colorfulness fascinated us. Her long, full Syrian trousers were red, with a skirt of blue draped over them. Of black velvet was her jacket; and her apron, blue and white. Beads and bracelets were her ornaments, and jeweled rings. Her head drapery was of black, with a yellow jar-pad, striped with green, red and white, outlined with pink beads. Her eyes had been given added charm by a blue-penciled extension, such as Egyptian beauties delight in. Had she been of higher social position, she would have doubtless been arrayed, like the daughters of Zion decried by Isaiah, with anklets, cauls, crescent, perfume box, shawl, satchel, hand-mirror, fine linen, and turban.

Of her, as well as of the beauty described in the Song of Solomon, it might be said :

"Thou art fair, O my love, . . .
Comely as Jerusalem, . . .
How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, . . .
Thy neck is like the tower of ivory;

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Thine eyes as the pools in Heshbon, . . .
Thy head upon thee is like Carmel,
And the hair of thy head like purple; . . .
How fair and how pleasant art thou, . . .
This thy stature is like a palm-tree."

But her companion showed a sour-faced indifference to our attentions to his fair one. He was a typical man of the East in his conviction that it was unnecessary to show his admiration. He was proud of her, but why make any fuss? The big fact that mattered was that she belonged to him. The little niceties of conduct, such as his carrying her bundle of fagots, were of no consequence. Unhampered and free, he walked on before, while the fair burden-bearer of the family followed at his heels in the dust. We could not regret her bundle of brush, for it called into play the grace of her long arms that half-haloed her head.

In sharp contrast to the freedom of our Nazareth Sunshine was a group of Arab women whom we met soon after, sitting along a roadside cracking stone with small hammers and lending a hand to the men who were taking a dangerous curve out of the highway. They were indeed making "straight the way of the Lord," the way of safety for others. But woe unto these by whom the straightening was being accomplished! Their life had not yet reached its proper evaluation, in spite of Christ's having been sent into this very land that "they might have life and have it abundantly."

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BOYS OF NAZARETH

But ever always, citizens of Nazareth will mean for us the sturdy boys being reared at the orphanage of the Near East Relief on its hilltop in Galilee, in a spirit which seems the reincarnation of Christ himself. For Nazareth is a *boy's town*. Its roads and homes and hills are full of merry faces and playful jests.

THE BOY OF NAZARETH

Jesus of the Nazareth hills,
Still your boyish presence fills
Every dimpled valley now
Under cypress-crested brow.

Children's laughter, peasant-fared,
Yellow lamplight on their head,
Brings you near to where you shared
Nazareth people's coarse brown bread.

But when constellations bend
Close where Nazareth hilltops end,
Then you leave the quiet street;
God your Father nightly meet;
Walk with him in heavenly praise
And learn from him creation's ways.

With such thoughts as these in mind we were peering into the faces of lads along a Nazareth road one evening, trying to find one which would give some hint of Jesus' human physiognomy. At last we found a handsome lad, clean-featured and aglow. Sitting at the door

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of his father's house. What was our horror, then, when he called out roguishly to us, "Yes, we have no bananas to-day!" Yet Christ himself would have been the last to condemn the robust exuberance of this normal youth.

The boys of the Near East Orphanage and farm are bringing a new note of optimism into the town. Bare-legged, sun-burned from working in their summer harvest fields, simply clad, simply fared, and vigorous, a little company of them came down to the town one evening with their lanterns to escort us up the hill to a truly Oriental performance of "The Prodigal Son." It was already quite dark as we began our ascent up a footpath which is a favorite among Nazareth people and is called affectionately "The Saviour's Walk."

How often Jesus must have lent himself and his lantern to just such simple acts of neighborliness as these boys were doing!

As the dim light from their lanterns swinging up before us fell on their sturdy biceps, hardened by such climbing of rocky paths as made Jesus increase in "stature and in favor with God and man," we were overwhelmed with a sense of tenderness and found comfort in the evening shadows that hid the scalding things which rolled down our cheeks. These boys were the "*light of the world*," not only to us for the moment, but to their families and their race who are looking to them for future leadership.

We turned our faces up to the blinding myriads of stars that leaned low in the cool, clear night of Naza-

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reth. They were indeed a multitude "so great that no man can number them." Little wonder that Abram of old felt overwhelmed when, looking upon such scintillating hosts, he contemplated God's promise of a progeny as numerous as these. Never was the Milky Way more milky—a great arched pathway of pearly mist. A single silver star fell out from it and flashed its way to the horizon. The "Big Dipper" lay so close to our hilltop that we could have pulled it down and quaffed a draught of heavenly nectar, it seemed. Once we looked back at little Nazareth, already sleepily retired within her house walls. No lighted streets were here. Yet we knew that

"In thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night."

Lights in several peasant villages across the hills of Galilee twinkled like fallen constellations. They would be swallowed up in darkness when we returned.

Then, as our stumbling steps followed the boys', picking their way over familiar stones, our eyes fell upon a host of glowing little creatures at our feet. Scientists would have listed them as "larvæ of beetles." To us they were Galilæan diamonds, bits of fallen constellations, fair, precious things among the rocks, shining to illuminate anew the Saviour's walk and to make his way radiant for pilgrims of the Nazareth night.

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A NEAR-EAST VERSION OF "THE PRODIGAL SON"

In the low-raftered loft of the orphanage, a great collection of clean Armenian faces, spotless blouses and bare legs squatting on the floor greeted us. Many a little countenance was still shadowed with remembered sufferings and shocks. Boys who had been longer living the simple life of Galilæan peasants, so wholesome, so pure, so sufficient, smiled and stared in friendly welcome. An Armenian boy-choir of thirty members began the festival program with an harmonious arrangement of their stirring national anthem, in which the whole company joined until the rafters of the old building trembled. Christ recognized the force of song in the establishing of morale: "When they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives." And so do his helpers in their noble program for salvaging a nation.

The dramatic portion of the boys' program was certainly the best enactment of Scripture that we have seen anywhere. All the native dramatic gifts of these sons of the East brought amazing resources of ability. The properties were crude but scrupulously accurate in detail. True, the "wings" on the little stage were only of blue and white denim, but the rugs on the father's floor were genuine Persian ones. The low divan, where the head of the family reclined, smoking his hubble-bubble pipe, was well-cushioned and within reach of the charcoal stove on the floor, where a servant brewed in a copper pot, his steaming hot "coffee Turc."

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On the blue muslin sky Nazareth stars shone. The native kettle drum, the shepherd's pipes, the water-gourd at the Prodigal's side, the common feasting-bowl in the center of the floor, from which everyone dipped, all were there.

The leisureness of the pantomime action during the serving of the coffee; the highly dramatic entrance of the twelve-year-old Prodigal; his facial grimaces as he sipped the scalding drink and his long Hamptonesque soliloquies setting forth his causes for complaint, all showed that the background of Christ's first-century parable was native to these boys of to-day. People are at their best when re-enacting the history and emotions of their own race.

"Other families are better than mine," exclaimed the handsome little Prodigal, in beautiful Armenian. "They do not live so gorgeously as we but they have better times. You, father, are always wanting us to pray. I can no longer stand it."

During the play the wheezy gasoline lamp suspended from the rafters went out with a churly puff and oil lamps were hastily set on the platform. This caused great apprehension among the Western visitors. For during the merry-making over the return of the Lost Son, the loose boards shook the primitive "foot-lights" until the whole building was threatened with fire. But this did not phase the animated dancing and clapping of the neighbors who had been called to rejoice and to share the fatted calf.

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These Armenian lads had themselves known what it was to wander into a far country, to feel the pangs of famine and of want. These too had known days when through no fault of their own, they "would fain have filled" themselves "with the husks that the swine did eat." And who but an Armenian refugee could have given so vivid an interpretation of the wanderer in sheep-skin, with bared breast, picking vermin as he sat among wayside brambles, groaning with the stomach pains of starvation? The clever pig scene, with delicious snortings done by boys off-platform, delighted the young audience. To be sure, it did seem a little strange to hear the distressed father chanting his lament in Armenian to the Western tune, "Where Is My Wandering Boy To-night?" But the mournfulness of his Eastern wail saved the effect from bathos.

Following the presentation of several boxes of books which we had relayed from America via Beirut by motor, the eager-faced lads, hungry for learning, gathered close about us while their Armenian director spoke on their behalf: "These boys are glad you have come up the hill to visit them. They think you Americans are their fathers, their mothers, their brothers. We are trying to do for them what Christ mentioned in his first Nazareth sermon: 'To preach good tidings to the poor: . . . to proclaim release to the captives.' These boys were captives, they are poor. They have been miraculously saved through you. Our present hope is that we through them may give the East a new interpre-

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tation of Christianity—one which Moslems will no longer have occasion to look down upon, as an image-worshiping cult, unscrupulous in conduct."

IN A NAZARETH HOSPICE

By the lantern-light of our Armenian Boy Scouts we descended after the program to the clean, quiet hospital where we were guests of Scottish "citizens of Nazareth" who were maintaining a medical mission. Christ's immortality is in such places as this and not in ornamented Western churches built by rival sects on sites as uncertain as that of the annunciation, the "Kitchen of the Virgin" and the "Column of the Angel." We had no desire to visit the alleged "Workshop of Joseph," when we could see living lads at work with hammer and rule in the cool, shadowy shop of the Near East Relief, learning the way to honorable self-support under the oversight of a veiled figure moving with quiet ability among the pieces of satiny olive wood and oak, as the Master Carpenter himself was wont to do.

Strangely enough, our hospital was vacant, save for a small summer staff of matron and native helpers. For during the hottest months patients are all sent home to the neighboring villages from which they came

When our gracious hostess, in snowy veil and uniform, had ushered us that afternoon into a spacious room with a rose-tile floor and the miracle of running water, she had assured us that no patient had ever occupied our high iron beds and that the only fear we need

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have was from jackals, who might prowl into our room from the hills if we failed to close our shutters at night.

Yet, modern as this airy hospital is in comparison to the simple houses of the town below, its only light at night is from oil lamps, which give its nurses on their nightly rounds the aspect of "ladies of the lamp,"—wise virgins on missions of mercy. What soothing they actually bring to those "possessed of evil spirits and infirmities"! For poor creatures come bringing the same old sores and infections as lined Galilæan roadsides with suppliants two thousand years ago, tugging at the Master's garments for relief, so that his clinical chart read, "In that hour he cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits; and on many that were blind he bestowed sight."

Appropriately enough, the "recovery of sight to the blind" alluded to in Jesus' first sermon at Nazareth is one of the chief ministries of the Edinburgh hospital here. In a single year as many as a hundred and fifty operations are performed by the eye department. In addition, great comfort is dispensed to the hopelessly blind and to many other clinic and ward patients by a blind girl evangelist. Our hostess said of her one evening as we sat watching her mount scarlet "lilies of the field" and golden buttercups which made us know the paradise that is spring on Nazareth hills: "I am sorry you cannot meet our Sitt Sophy. She always has time to tarry by the beds of women patients, and though she is blind, the acuteness of her other faculties gives

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her a memory that never seems to forget their names, their beds, their troubles. She often passes on to us information showing the cause of illness to be more in the line of unhappy family relations than of actual disease. And who but a blind native could be clever enough to quiet an Arab child with 'carob' seeds? Little Ahmed Khudar was not a very nice boy and declared, 'All those girls with the funny white things on their hair are coming to give me pain, so as soon as one comes near me I shall scream.' But Sitt Sophy brought from the Nazareth bazaar 'carob pods' (whose husks the Prodigal ate), and thereafter Ahmed's disposition was transformed."

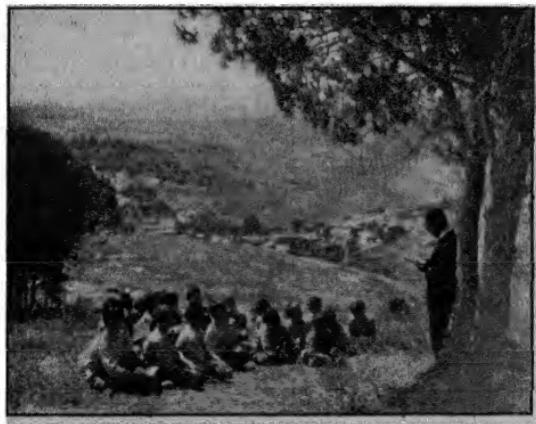
That the "acceptable year of the Lord" is being proclaimed to even Moslem patients is illustrated by the case of an old lady of seventy, brought from Deborah's village at the foot of Mount Tabor. "Just to think," she exclaimed upon leaving the hospital, "I have journeyed twice from Deborah all the way to Mecca to gain salvation! And *I had only to come to the Nazareth Hospital to learn that Jesus saves!*"

Not only are the Scottish missionaries caring for six thousand office patients a year but they have a regular out-station clinic in Cana and pay visits to Shunem, Nain, Endor, and other villages. Only the lack of assistants limits their opportunities. Of them, as of Christ, the words of Luke are descriptive: "They went throughout the villages, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere." With what inspired accuracy he

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speaks! "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them."

Only a physician would think it worth noting that the cool of evening was the time when friends brought out sufferers who would have succumbed to the sunshine of daytime Galilee.





A WEDDING CARAVAN AT CANA

CHAPTER IV

THE MULTITUDE

"A great multitude from Galilee followed."

EVERYONE who has tarried in Nazareth long enough to make it the center of Galilee pilgrimages, can readily understand the phrase of Luke: "Fame went out concerning him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all." Christ possessed Galilee; and completely it possessed him. "From Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and beyond the Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him." And this multitude is the hero of our present chapter. For the rolling countryside between Nazareth and the towns which in Jesus' day were practically contiguous around the Sea of Galilee made up a great neighborly community in which news traveled quickly. People moved back and forth freely then, as to-day. It is only sixteen miles from Nazareth down to Tiberias, with Kefr Kenna (Cana) and Hattîn (the traditional Mount of Beatitudes) along the way.

Our first view of Cana flashed from a hilltop slightly higher than the one on which this village lies. Just so

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had Nazareth loomed; just so would Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The round dome of Cana's Latin church, its characteristic stretches of road, visible up and down courses of hill that bound the rocky plains; its olive groves, its braying asses, its healthy cattle, all were before us.

Behind a hedge of formidable cactus, fruited with prickly "pears," a prosperous grove of pomegranates grew, rosy with the red-gold apples of the East. Children were selling them along the way, two or three on a twig, as a great native delicacy for those who can drink the luscious liquid stored around the fat red seed-sacks, without minding the puckering of its bitter aftermath. Surely King Saul, true to his Oriental type, must often have chosen a pomegranate tree to sit under during his royal pouts. The poet of the "Song of Solomon" sang of "an orchard of pomegranates, with precious fruits." And the artists who adorned the Temple with "network and pomegranates, . . . all of brass," not only selected a piece of artistic symbolism but represented a taste deep-seated in the fancy of the people.

We, however, preferred to leave the pomegranates to the consul's daughter, who leaned far out of our car reveling in the juicy treasure which streamed onto the dusty highway, while we sauntered over to the roadside spring to see the ornamented sarcophagus serving as watering trough. The proximity of this modern fountain to the church covering the traditional site of the

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first miracle of Christ helped us to picture the servants of the marriage host, running hither to fill their pots.

But in Cana one has as little freedom to meditate as at the Pyramids of Gizeh. Instantly a "multitude" springs up to tease one. If the populations of busy towns have vanished since the time of Christ, certainly they have left successors in the form of squalid villagers who display as much curiosity and determination to attach themselves to new personalities as the multitude which "sought to touch him, thronging and pressing." For "many thousands of the multitude were gathered together, insomuch that they trod one upon another."

THE THRONGING EAST

This anonymous multitude that weaves in and out through Christ's Galilæan ministry, marveling at his miracles, tugging at his garments, following him to his desert place of rest, reaching their hands for his bread, has an entity which becomes very real when one walks in the villages from which it sprang. Strikingly scientific are the scriptural portrayals of this impetuous force which stood on the seashore, fascinated by his words; which, out of its abnormal interest in the private affairs of a public personage, called his attention to his family standing without. It was a multitude which spread garments before him on Palm Sunday; a multitude which Jerusalem feared. It was before the multitude that Pilate washed his hands in evidence of his innocence of the "blood of this just person."

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The very word “multitude” appeals to the Easterner because of its superlativeness. “A multitude of the heavenly host,” “a multitude of fishes,” a “multitude of stars,”—these were delightful exorbitances that persisted through gospel times. And when John, in his lonely vigil on sea-girt Patmos, saw “a multitude, which no man can number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues,” he was unconsciously reminiscent of the multitudes which in Galilee heard his Master gladly.

And so it was that in the insistent thronging of our little crowd of Cana folks we became very much aware of what the “multitude” meant in the Galilæan experiences of Jesus. They were not to be escaped. Children tugged at us to buy miniature wine pots. When rebuffed with “Piasters all gone,” they insisted: “Yes, piasters! Look, sir, this jar very cute. Look, lady, you take it!”

Only one household in Cana seemed to continue its normal work during our visit. A woman here was mixing mortar for an addition to the house, which her husband, in reposeful veil and garments striped with red, was building. The hands and faces of both were spattered with honest lime and dust.

A WEDDING AT CANA

In Henry van Dyke's *Out-of-Doors in the Holy Land* we had read of his meeting a wedding party at Cana. At the time we indulged his statement as a bit

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of justifiable poetic license. But as we ourselves started down from Cana to Capernaum we too met a gorgeous Galilæan bridal caravan on camels. Some of the haughty-headed, velvet-footed beasts carried as many as three women each. One bore an entrancing Syrian Madonna and child. Animals and women alike were decked in festive attire; camels with broidered saddle cloths, beads and bells; women with veiled turbans, layer upon layer of colorful skirts, ankle chains, bracelets, amulets and rings, all topped off with cheap cotton umbrellas from the bazaars of Nazareth, carried as proudly as if they were Cleopatra's royal palms. The men rode beside the camels on donkeys or trudged afoot. This was the only instance in the Near East, where we saw women *looking down* upon men.

After Kefr Kenna, Elias sped his car through several unimportant villages and groves of almond trees, one of which was large enough to warrant the erection of a leafy watch tower against thieves "that break through and steal." With the rock-hewn tombs of Lubieh behind us, a low volcanic mountain shaped like a saddle with two pommels drew our attention. It was Karn Hattîn, the Horns of Hattîn, in which many see the open-air pulpit from which Christ delivered his Sermon on the Mount to the multitude resting on the opposite slope. This site seems remote from the lake-lands from which the audience was attracted, but it would certainly have been a merciful act to lead them up here from the heat of the sub-sea-level basin. Cer-

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tainly, Hattîn was thought authentic by the crusaders who, in an excruciating July siege against Saladin in 1187, suffered so disastrous a defeat here that their ambition for displacing the Saracens from the Holy Land came to an end.

At the edge of the ridge from which the road descends abruptly to the lake, Elias halted to show us just such a panorama as must often have charmed the soul of the Poet Christ. The absence of trees gave the land the aspect of a topographical map. But fields of eggplant, tomatoes, and wheat saved it from bleakness. For a Jewish colony has established itself here in this strategic place commanding a view of all Gennesaret. Mount Tabor, new-crowned with the loveliest church in all Palestine, lay behind us. Off to the north we glimpsed majestic Hermon, his snowy head lifted above a collar of cloud and mist. Sheer at our feet lay the lake, like a blue eye reflecting the summer sky. It was overwhelming to come upon such an expanse of living water in a land choking with thirst—pure, sweet water, abounding in fish.

No cities animate the lakeshore to-day save Tiberias, and this has no association with Christ. Built on the site of a cemetery and polluted by foreign idols, it was despised and avoided by his contemporaries. It has been facetiously christened “Sultan el Baraghit” (King of the Fleas), and has little to attract one save its mineral baths, popular among Arabs. Yet its visiting Druse dignitaries strutting through Tiberias in long

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red coats and slippers turned up at the ends; its ancient black castle, its new white houses, waving palms, soaring minaret, and the courage of its citizens attempting to carry on the normal business of life six hundred feet below sea-level—all this challenged our respect.

From our ridgy eminence Elias pointed out on the lakeshore one clump of trees which he identified as the site of Bethsaida, that village where Christ enabled a blind man first to see men as trees walking, and then to see "all things clearly." Little wonder that he expected faith from Bethsaida. "If the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." Together with Chorazin, Bethsaida is no more. Nothing would reward one for taking boat to its site across the lake, save a mass of ruins in the birthplace city of Peter, Andrew, and Philip.

ALONG THE LAKE

Not until one has "gone down" from Nazareth to the Gennesaret section does he realize why Christ was content to forsake his boyhood home when it rejected him and adopt Capernaum as "his own city." "And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali." For if the Nazareth environment of his adolescent years was buoyantly lyric, the lake region became a symphony of poetic experiences—a marine pastorale.

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Along the inviting shore-line, we saw small burros carrying sacks of fertile earth for the gardens of Galilee. A single white-winged sailboat satisfied our sense of Galilæan repose and suggested those occasions when because "there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat," Christ and his friends went away in a boat "to a desert place apart."

A weary fisherman resting in the shadow of the dory he had pulled up on the beach and turned over on its side, suggested how Andrew and Peter many a time found rest after a night on the lake. How unimaginative these fellows were, to waken the Master from sleep in so relaxing a place as the prow of a boat afloat on Galilee!

Who can plunge his soul in the blue of those waters that lapped the craft of Christ and doubt the faithfulness of Luke's colorful narrative? "He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee. Now it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God, that he was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret and he saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the multitudes out of the boat." Oh, the strategy of the Master, outwitting thus the intrusions of the Galilæan throng, yet giving himself effectively to them!

Young boys were swimming in the refreshing water

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near the shore, where pink oleanders and dwarf olives made precious shade. Flocks of sheep and goats were bathing their tired little feet in the still waters. Clean cattle were knee-deep in it. A lad baking something on a sheet of metal set over stones on the beach flashed before us a vivid picture of that translucent, unearthly Figure who "manifested himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias," saying, "Children, have ye aught to eat?" And "the other disciples came in the little boat . . . dragging the net *full* of fishes. So when they got out upon the land, they see a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread."

The lakeland itself is so stimulating to reverie that one does not at first miss the great companies which once peopled it. Few visible ruins remain to remind one of forgotten yesterdays. It seems incredible that even the sites of several large towns have been lost. But when one begins to think of the crowds who once gained their livelihood here, the silence palls his spirit.

Where were "the great multitudes" who came to meet the company of Jesus when they returned from the mountain? Where was the multitude from which "a certain woman emerged"? The multitude which "sought to touch him; for power came forth from him and healed them all"? "Whom do the multitudes say that I am?" the Christ had asked.

In a moment of introspection we felt that the peevish words of the weary disciples, "Send the multitudes away," had found Nemesis in the present desola-

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tion of the sites around the shore. Certainly, no multitude could be mustered to-day so great that Christ's helpers would need to set them down in companies of fifty to maintain order.

FORGOTTEN YESTERDAYS

Of Magdala along the lake, nothing remains but squalid "Majdal," on the flat roof-tops of whose mud-stone hovels leafy booths have been erected and allowed to tumble over in the summer wind storms. Two girls waved to us from one of them. The older was a bronzed and townsled Moslem; the other, an extreme type of Albino, white-haired, pinkish-eyed, milky-skinned. Something about the contrast in the two faces suggested the darkness of the unreclaimed and the radiance of the ointment-bearing Mary in the Easter garden.

Tell Hûm, one of the best attested sites for vanished Capernaum, is finding again, through the skill of scholars, stones which are eloquent of His influence which discipled there both gentlefolk and fishermen. Of this resurrected witness we shall speak in our chapter, "Mothers of Judah."

ESCAPING THE MULTITUDE

One can easily make a preliminary visit to these lowlands around the Lake of Galilee in the forenoon, return to Nazareth for luncheon and a siesta, and in the afternoon drive across the Plain of Esraelon to Mount

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Tabor and make by motor the ascent of this noble peak which has much to substantiate its claim to association with Christ's transfiguration. In all Palestine there is no site where the spirit demands so much and is so little disappointed as here.

Passing the Moslem village named "Deborah," in honor of the wife of Lapidoth, who meted out justice under her palm tree between Ramah and Bethel, we visualized the thrilling scene which occurred on these mountain slopes when Barak, at Deborah's command, drew to this height "ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun." By what clever strategy they stood on Tabor, so as to have a running start for their attack on Sisera in the Plain of Megiddo below! "And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in which Jehovah hath delivered Sisera into thy hand; . . . So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. And Jehovah discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots."

There were moments during our ascent of hair-pin curves built for pilgrims afoot and not for motorists, when we felt that we and our chariot would also surely be "discomfited." Elias confirmed our fear when, with native enjoyment of danger, he exclaimed, "Well, we are going up to God now"! But we escaped with only a broken spring.

It is humanly pleasing to imagine that when Jesus and his disciples climbed the Mount of Transfiguration—if this be Tabor—that they made the ascent late in

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the afternoon when breezes from the Mediterranean were blowing across these hills of Galilee. A long and tedious walk over dusty paths, we think. Yet how amply rewarding the view they received from its exalted head!

To-day, a double row of new-planted trees gives leafy perspective to the gleaming white church just completed by American funds for the Franciscan brothers.

A superbly simple piece of architecture it is, built on the lines of the crusader's cross—a square cross with a small one in each of its four corners. Compared to the cluttered confusion of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, this shrine, so simple, so at peace within itself, draws down the certain approval of Christ. His transfigured face is reflected in its very walls and the grace of his presence is portrayed in a very satisfying mosaic over the altar in which his glory is witnessed by Peter, James, and John, with Moses and Elias on either side. This is one instance where a real artist has been able to assist rather than hinder people in their effort to reconstruct sacred history. The inscription beneath the mosaic, "*Transfiguratus est ante eos,*" was true for us. He *was* transfigured before us.

Under the altar is a bow-shaped chapel preserving the walls of an ancient cave. How New-World and how American it is, to have the windows here of transparent glass looking onto mountain and valley, with nature glazing her own colors!

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"IT IS GOOD TO BE HERE"

But the supreme gift of Tabor is the view over Galilee from her square towers. Here indeed are spread out "the uttermost parts of Galilee." From one cupola the brown Horns of Hattîn look small as a burial mound; green fields roll away as lengths of pleasant carpet; azure lake and misty walls of Transjordania lead the eye away to the horizon. From the opposite tower sunlit Nain is seen, whose gates rejoiced when Jesus restored a widow's son on her way to his burial; and Endor, to which Solomon fared to ask "the woman that hath a familiar spirit" to summon back the spirit of Samuel for a *conference on arms*.

So cool is the mountaintop, and so removed from the noisy triflings incident to normal Palestinian village life, that we, like Peter, felt, "Master, it is good to be here." Our reluctance to leave was increased by a glimpse into the airy refectory, with its windows open to vistas far away; and with long tables set, in readiness for a hungry "multitude" of pilgrims from Italy who were momentarily expected.

But the charm of another night in quiet, lyric Nazareth awaited us. And our springless descent to the plain was forgotten in the Christ-filled lyric loveliness of "His own country." No multitude awaited us at the base, like the feverish throng who met Jesus and his disciples, to present for cure an epileptic boy who had been falling into fire and into water and had been

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brought in vain to the disciples for relief. The crowd was ever at the heels of Christ.

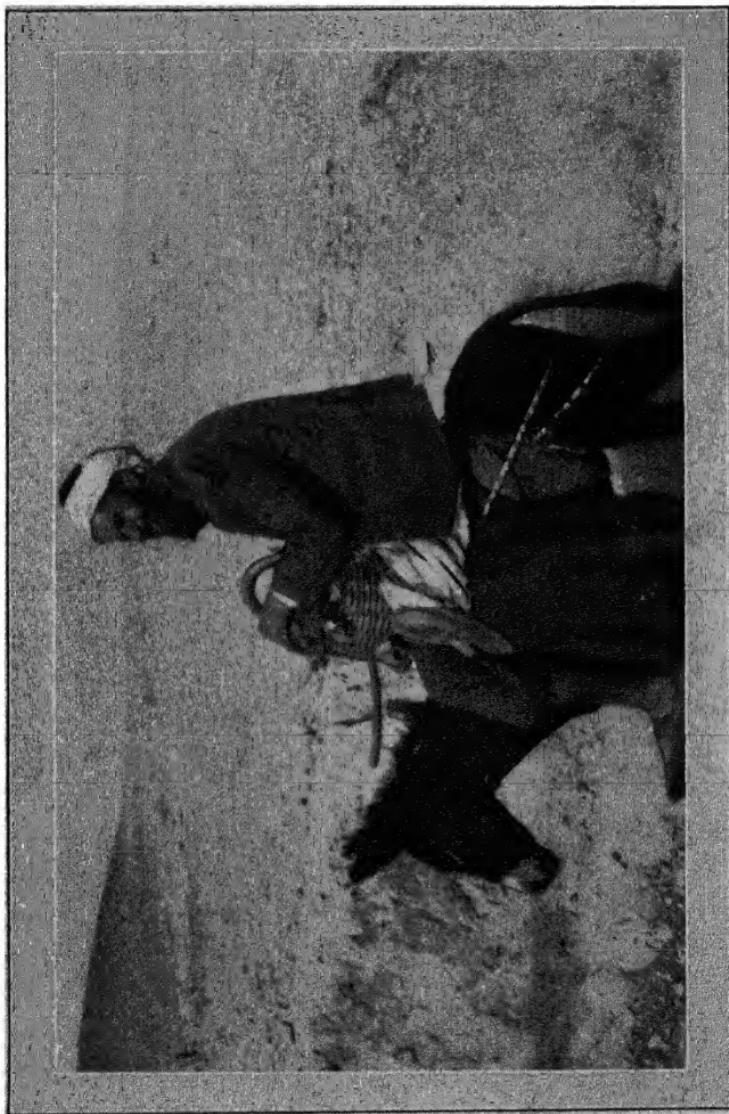
Deep content filled us as we strolled that night under the marvelous stars from Nazareth to our hospital on the hill. The consul's daughter was with us and we talked of the deep things we cared most about.

"There is a professor of chemistry over in America," she said, "to whom some day I must return. I need his thought for my work at the college. He has influenced my life profoundly."

Every great teacher does.

And the winds of Nazareth sang of One who was both able to minister to peasant multitudes and to elicit from a leader of Israel an approval that made the night rejoice: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God."

A GOOD SAMARITAN ON THE JERICHO ROAD



CHAPTER V

GOOD SAMARITANS

"A certain Samaritan, as he journeyed."

ALONG the Wilderness Road between Jerusalem and Jericho passers-by are so infrequent that they fix themselves permanently in one's mind, together with the portions of the way where they appeared.

We had left the Jaffa Gate about six in the morning, had swung down the road between the Gardens of Gethsemane, still shimmering with the beauty of the day-spring, and had begun the gradual descent of Olivet, looking over at the mellow walls of Jerusalem with her Dome of the Rock and lesser mosques elevating the massiness of the city compactly builded. This morning we did not tarry among the old Palestinian houses of the Moslem village of Bethany but pressed on along the Wilderness Road, hoping to reach the Dead Sea before the intolerable mid-morning heat.

After Bethany the fall toward Jericho was a series of rolling climbs and descents over the wavelike contour of mountain-wastes, looking much like low volcanic upheavals—denuded of trees, barren of bushes, monotonously brown save where a coarse yellowish

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grass gave a sheen like the gloss on very fine old Persian rugs.

WILDERNESS SILHOUETTES

Along the bold slopes shepherds and their flocks were frequently etched in bold relief. Every footpath stood out like veins on the temples of the headlands. We wondered where even goats could obtain meager grazing in these wastelands of Judæa. Occasionally camels were silhouetted against the hilltop horizons, and once we passed a little herd whose pride was a baby camel, whose soft, sand-gray coat gave it the appearance of a humped young deer. The curve of its long neck suggested a high-prowed Venetian gondola set up on four slender posts. Camels and ostriches both seem built along "speed-boat" lines. As the female camel carries her single calf for eleven months and suckles it for a year, the cameleer treasures every young one which comes to increase his scanty wealth. For desert camels can carry heavy cargoes twenty-five miles a day for three days without water; and when their destination is reached, they do not run to leafy shelter, but crouch beside their load as if really relishing the sensation of the burning sands against their bodies. And no man's herd is large enough to satisfy his sense of wealth. Very puny indeed would even the larger Palestinian herds to-day appear beside the six thousand camels which are attributed to the heritage of Job, or to the great number presented by Pharaoh to Abraham.

GOOD SAMARITANS

Soon after passing The Apostles' Fountain, near the border of ancient Benjamin and Judah, we came upon a man with a crooked staff and a voluminous veil, leading away a herd of asses which suggested the lost ones which Kish sent his young son, Saul, to find in the hill country of Ephraim. We could readily understand why his search had been vain. Wilderness asses have a way of looking like rocks.

PEASANTS FROM TRANSJORDANIA

Our next wayfarers were a man from beyond the Jordan and his little son, trudging along through the choking dust of the highway. They had been to Jerusalem the day before, to sell their flock at the market. And now, "piasters" in hand, they were on their way back to the table-lands of Transjordania, that granary of modern Palestine. The smiling morning face of the lad led us to wonder what reason he had for being so happy. His poverty was apparent from his soiled loose garments and homemade sandals. His bed had been only the wady-rocks. So it must have been the glorious stars he had seen as he lay through the lonely wilderness night; and the dreams of Jerusalem sights that made his wakeful hours, tormented by fear of cave-lurking robbers, comforted by memories. Memories of sweet-meat sellers, whose wares he had at least looked upon; memories of great crowds jostling him at David's Tower, where no one could be lonely; memories of bread-boys with trays of Arab loaves on

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their heads; visions of the iced-drink peddler, walking through the streets with a huge glass fountain strapped about his waist, clanking two brass trays together to call attention to the pinkish liquid corked with a piece of real ice. The child could not have been smiling because of his good breakfast; it had been only the usual "zad," the poor man's fare of unleavened bread and figs, munched as he trudged along behind his father, with a drink from his water-bottle filled at the Apostles' Fountain. Yet there was reason to be glad just because the sheep were sold. At least he could walk freely along the highway, without having constantly to goad and guide the stupid flock. And he could think of the marvels of the bazaars which he had wanted but never would possess.

AN ANCIENT RÔLE ASSUMED

Over a roadbed remarkably good, because the ancient Jericho Road was improved by the Kaiser as a part of his Berlin-to-Bagdad dream and kept in repair by the British forces and Arabs during the Great War, we came to a rocky gorge, stratified with red, known as the Hill of Blood. Not far beyond we paused at a modern khan with an unimposing wall surrounding its courtyard and saluted a possible site of the inn to which the good Samaritan carried the bruised and way-laid traveler.

A gibbering host ran out, in apparent determination to portray the ancient rôle by urging upon us round,

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hard watermelons, such as had already made one of us quite ill at Nazareth. When we declined his proffer of the "last chance for water between here and the Dead Sea," and explained the reason, he said in kindly but labored English, "I hope to see you better."

We did not tarry to investigate the ruins on the slope above, which may be crusading relics on the site where adventurous knights believed the venerable inn to have stood. For here, as elsewhere, we felt that *sites do not form such reliable links with the life of Christ, as the people of his land who persist into our own day.*

THE GOOD SAMARITAN EN ROUTE

This feeling was substantiated shortly after leaving the inn, when we came upon one who certainly satisfied our imagination on the matter of what the good Samaritan really looked like. Mounted on a kindly little ass he sat with his large frame balanced well to the rear of the beast's patient haunches. There was something about the pair that reminded us of the quaint story of Balaam, who "rose up in the morning and saddled his ass," and before his journey was completed heard the faithful creature speak of an angel which his master was unable to see "standing in the way."

Our rider was jogging along at a leisurely pace with a little basket of friendly greens swinging from his arm. Where in this barren countryside he had been able to find such beneficent herbs we could not imagine. He could scarcely have brought them from the Jeru-

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salem market, for they were not yet withered by the sun, and Jerusalem lay many mule's minutes behind. That they would have been healing and wholesome to an afflicted one we well believed.

Our "good Samaritan" wore a short greenish military coat picked up in the discard of post-war days along this important road, and underneath his coat a blue skirt. His red fez had a white band around it, giving the turbaned effect worn by many pious Moslems. But most of all, from the kindly beaming of his face he merited our calling him "A Good Samaritan." His countenance was strangely akin to that of our bearded shepherd at the Dog River, and of our Jerusalem merchant of the Mûristân, and of our seller of rose-water and amber at the Eyub Mosque in Constantinople. He was just such a man who, instructed in alms and kindly treatment of the poor by his Koran, would not have passed by a fellow traveler left stripped and beaten and half-dead along this lonely road. He would have done as the compassionate one portrayed by Christ to his disciples, in a story which they loved because it was so characteristic of that forlorn wilderness.

Christ's parables all actually occurred not once, but many times. The inn to which he referred was probably familiar to them. He added color to the story by making its hero, not a worthy Bethlehemite or son of Zion, but a member of a hated race: "A certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he

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saw him, he was moved with compassion, and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on *them* oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him."

We knew not whether we had looked on the site of the inn familiar to Jesus. But we felt very sure that we had looked that morning on the face of just such a kindly Oriental as would gladly have done what the good Samaritan did for him that fell among robbers. There are enough thieves along this Jericho Road even to-day to make repetitions of the parabolic incident very possible. In fact, at Nazareth we had talked with a gentle native teacher, who told us of being stripped that very season of her life savings when coming up to Jerusalem along this cave-infested highway.

A GOOD SAMARITAN ON PATROL

We felt too that the dashing desert policeman, mounted on a handsome Arabian horse, who stopped us at an abrupt curve in the road, with his rifle and cartridges belted securely to him, was playing the rôle of a good Samaritan. This Arab was patrolling a lonely stretch of the way within sight of the tents placed by the watchful eye of the British mandate on a hilltop commanding a sweeping view of thunder-riven slopes and shadowy ambush. The mobility of such mounted men demonstrated their desirability during the British campaign in Palestine. For *nations*, as well as individuals, may play the rôle of "good Samaritan."

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REAL SAMARITANS

But always these words will mean for us that little group of one hundred and seventy-five people, the remnant of "Ancient Israel," who believe themselves to be literally "good Samaritans." Clinging to traditional beliefs and to life itself on the outskirts of Nâblus (ancient Shechem) in the pass between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, they are probably the world's smallest racial and religious group.

The approach to their wretched haunts is through a country worn threadbare with the burden of its own history.

THE ARTERY OF THE EAST

We had dropped due south from Nazareth and crossed the fertile Plain of Jezreel, along the main highway which runs straight down to Egypt through the mountainous inheritance of Issachar's ancient tribe. Balfouria lay behind us, that "boom colony" of the Jews, boasting a wide "Main Street" with newly planted trees and homely Western houses; and Jezreel, with her houses of the older Palestinian type, not far from the place where Saul and Jonathan perished in their battle with the Philistines. Fields of sesame, looking fresh and green with the daintiness of un-scorched leaves, grew amid the parched summerlands, suggesting the immortality of the warriors who had battled there through the ages.

More cattle were grazing in this country than we

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had seen farther north. In stately, slow procession, sand-gray camels passed, with necklaces of blue beads and chiming bells, announcing their arrival with riches from Damascus. At Jenîn, a large Arab town with high latticed windows in its old houses, we paused to appreciate the pleasing mosque whose beehive dome was shaded by waving palms, while its minaret stood sentinel by the road. A crowd of unusually tall Moslems rose from a sidewalk café to see our car pass, their floating white veils and striped shirts accentuating their gaunt figures.

Next came a series of caves, in which families were living; and rich flocks of long-eared goats and deep-coated yellow sheep. Dothan lay just off our highway and Elias assured us that he could show us "the pit from which Joseph was extracted" if he had but time to take us there!

GOING THROUGH SAMARIA

Then the real uplands of Samaria began, with an occasional Arab village of mud-stone, well camouflaged by dust-wind deposits. Leafy shelters of brush, set up on sticks and anchored with stones, spoke man's effort to shelter his head from the perils of the noon-day while watching his vineyards.

At last we came to the highest point of the road in its course through the Samaritan Mountains. All about us lay a land rich in olive groves, the hoariness of whose gnarled trunks accentuated the silver-laciness of their

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leaves and helped us understand why Minerva had selected this choicest of earth's precious things as her patron-gift to Athens. Under the olive trees flocks of hot sheep contended for shade.

It was indeed a "fat" land, such as could have ministered of old to the tables of Ahab and of Herod in their hill-capital at Samaria. Its fruits were proverbial with Jeremiah, who prophesied a time when captive Israel should again "plant vineyards upon the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant, and shall enjoy *the fruits thereof.*"

AN ARAB RUSE

"The people drink olive-oil here," declared Elias. "It is very plentiful. They like it, and in Nâblus they make soap of olive oil!"

By a clever Arab decoy—calling our attention to "scare-jackals" of piled-up stones when we should have been turning off the road to the ruins of Samaria's capital—Elias defrauded us. He declared that the way up the mountain was in dangerous disrepair; that it was bad luck to turn back anyhow. In reality, he only wished to get to Nâblus promptly for his lunch!

BETWEEN EBAL AND GERIZIM

He did, however, explain the difficult topography of Nâblus, descended from Shechem, with lofty Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal guarding the historic pass which, according to Samaritan claims, was Abraham's

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destination on his long trek from Ur of the Chaldees, and where Jacob had pitched his tent. He explained that Ebal—full of cactus and caves to-day—is said by the Samaritans to have been designed by God for curses and blessings, while Gerizim, “the Ancient Mountain,” was for rejoicing and sacrifice. God had centered his worship here long before Jerusalem was chosen, he declared, because here God had instructed Abraham to erect an altar.

But I confess that we were less interested in establishing Gerizim as “Bethel” and Ebal as “Ai,” between which mountains the “good Samaritans” contend that their early altar was built, than in seeing the curious remnant of humanity who very clearly were not among those “many Samaritans” who “believed on him because of the word of the woman, who testified” at Jacob’s Well. The people of the colony we started out to find have never acknowledged, like the group that day at Sychar well which history has located convincingly just around the shoulder of Gerizim from Nâblus, we “know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.” For they are still looking for a Messiah who will come six thousand years after creation, will live to the age of one hundred, and be buried on Gerizim until the final Judgment.

Nâblus itself is to-day a busy Moslem town of fifteen thousand citizens, who occupy the lower slopes of both mountains which were the contention-point of so much religious prejudice in Jesus’ day and long before. A

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prosperous hotel and squalid but well-stocked native bazaars bring two civilizations into just that sort of contrast which we felt when we saw a new American sedan dash up a very steep hill of the town, carrying two heavily veiled Moslem women, several children, a native man in Western dress, and a uniformed chauffeur.

"ANCIENT ISRAEL" AT HOME

Through cluttered Moslem streets at the southwest corner of Nâblus we picked our way toward the home of "Ancient Israel." Never had we seen such reeking alleys or such loathsome houses, offering shelter to people and animals alike. From high-barred windows red-haired women stared down at us. We shrank from contact with coughing, sore-eyed, half-naked children sitting among the stony débris that made passageways unworthy the name of street. Stooping to make our way through cluttered, musty tunnels, we came at last to the small synagogue (Keniset-es-Samireh), where a tremendously "high" priest, in stature at least—the nephew of the real High Priest, Isaac Ben Omran—met us. His stomach bulged from a long blue-and-white cotton robe and a red fez concealed his uncut hair. An unsuccessful beard added no charm to his weak face. A group of bare-footed children clung to his skirts. The little boy-candidates for priesthood had sweet faces and wore masses of hair tucked under their fezes. The barefooted girls ^{of} wore theirs bobbed.

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A VENERABLE PARCHMENT DISPLAYED

The young Samaritan priest—who had been apt in learning English from books and visitors—urged us to step into the small whitewashed synagogue where three services are conducted on Saturdays. It is a poor place, claiming survival since 715 A. D., but is rich in possessing a venerable copy of the Pentateuch, whose five books alone constitute the Torah of the Samaritans. He chatted with us about their various customs; their abstaining from cooking and smoking and working on the Sabbath; their separation of new mothers from their families for purification—eighty days for a girl child, forty for a son; their circumcision of infants at eight days. Vividly he pictured the Samaritan Pass-over processions to Mount Gerizim, made us try to see Joshua of old reciting the law of Moses from its slope and gathering all the tribes of Israel for his impressive farewell; pictured all Israel again assembled there upon the death of Solomon, to offer the throne to Rehoboam; and reminded us of Joseph's burial place near by, in the “parcel of ground” which Jacob had bought for a hundred pieces of silver.

When questioned as to their relations with their Moslem neighbors, he replied: “We get along fairly well, although they sometimes smack us on the cheek because they think we are Jews. We are not. We are *Ancient Israel*.”

By this time the high priest himself, Isaac Ben Omran, entered. A patriarch, indeed, with noble forehead,

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well-formed nose, deep-set eyes, and priestly beard. His spotless gown was of gray wool and his turbanned fez was bright red. His whole demeanor challenged instant respect. In return for coins in his "synagogue box" (the priestly family does no secular work) he brought out his priceless copy of the Pentateuch. He claimed it to be "three thousand, five hundred and seventy-seven years old, having been written thirteen years after the death of Moses (upon whom be peace)."

Removing its gorgeous silk cover, he called our attention first to the embossed metal rolls encasing the parchments made from the skin of sacrificed animals. On them we noticed likenesses of the tabernacle, candlesticks, shewbread, a laver, trumpet, and tools of sacrifice.

Whether this particular code of the Pentateuch was as venerable as our priestly host professed, it was at least a treasure which any scholar would delight to examine scientifically.

Dreading the necessity of retracing our way through the offensive quarter between the synagogue and the square where we had deserted Elias, we plunged into the thick of it and took satisfaction in dividing the blame for such social conditions between the Moslems and the backward-looking remnant who term themselves sons of "The Mountain of the Inheritance of the Shekinah!"

But the retrospective accent of these "good Samaritans" was soon forgotten when we found a radiantly

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pure young woman at the Well of Jacob, a few minutes south from Nâblus. Inviting us into the church partially completed over the site, she lighted a taper and sent it down to show us that "the well is deep," still, even as the woman of Sychar had said to Christ so long ago.

Looking upon her, as she walked with us out to an olive tree where her pet white sheep, heavy with wool, was grazing, we felt those matchless words of Jesus live again: "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. . . . God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth."



CHAPTER VI

THE BURDEN-BEARER

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

GRAPES, sweet white grapes from old Hebron, slightly green white grapes to be eaten with salt by natives of Jerusalem—these are the burdens under which our "fellah" is staggering into Zion. He has laid cool leaves from the vine over the juicy globules to protect them from a mid-morning sun hot enough to burst their taut skins. In characteristic Oriental fashion, he is more merciful to his cargo than to his own head, whose brimless turban offers no shade to his throbbing brow. But the point most in peril of sunstroke—the back of his neck—is protected by the very leafiness of his burden. No need, here, of a colorful silk "khaffiyeh." This floating headdress he leaves to his picturesque Moslem brother of slightly higher station.

What a cranium, to be able to stand the pressure of those twisted cords in August heat of Palestine! His must be what Nehemiah, that keen observer of old, described as "the strength of the bearers of burdens."

After scaling the last dusty hill outside Jerusalem, he has just come into the city through that breach in



HEBRON GRAPES FOR HOT JERUSALEM

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the wall beside the Jaffa Gate which a proud emperor of a generation ago made ready for his own pompous entry—an egotism which time has transmuted by service into a general blessing for the community. For the old gates of Zion are too narrow at this congested angle to admit all the throngs who are continually “coming up to Jerusalem” from Bethlehem or down from the old Sidonian coast by camel-train or motor.

The burden-bearer has not been tempted to tarry in the shadowy recesses of Jaffa Gate, known to natives as the Hebron Gate, for his load is too well poised and his destination now too near at hand to justify his lingering among the yawning Arab shoe-polishers who sit gossiping at the portal, pointing out to passing Westerners the chronic dustiness of their pilgrim shoes, the remedy for which is easily available from their brass-trimmed boxes. Their function makes clear the background from which sprang Christ’s ministry of basin and towel.

Blessed are the bare feet of him who brings new grapes for old Jerusalem! Parched throats will have refreshment and thirsty ones satisfaction. Someone may buy his load intact and cast it into the winepress. Or many travelers passing through the Holy City may stock their scrips with the juicy fruit which furnishes not only *portable* but *potable* liquid in a land where safe springs are rare indeed.

Toward the cavelike food stalls in the shadows of narrow David Street—one of the stepped thorough-

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fares of Jerusalem whose real name is "Suweikat Al-lun," or "street of the small public markets"—he staggers on his unseeing way, dodging pedestrians only by the shadows that they cast on the hot stones before him. His eyes ache under the contrasty black-and-white designs that leap back at him as he bends. Surely, here is one who "has borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat" so vividly described by Jesus in his parable of the laborers in the vineyard.

His grapes hearken us back to the giant clusters brought by the spies of Moses from that land of milk and honey just a score of miles distant. "Now the time was the time of the first-ripe grapes. . . . And they went up by the south, and came unto Hebron; . . . And they came unto the valley of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it upon a staff between two." Little wonder that the giant clusters so excited the weary wanderers that they stampeded in repudiation of the conservative leadership of Moses and demanded immediate entrance to the promised land. Even the report of "men of great stature" in whose sight the Israelites "were . . . as grasshoppers," did not discount the charm of those Hebron grapes. From Israel's pilgrim days through the apocalyptic hours of John and on to our prosaic present Hebron and her grapes have been proverbially coveted. Their presence on our table in the little German hotel made even the unescapable mutton appetizing.

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But it is not so much the burden as the man under the burden that interests us. We wonder if he is the owner of a little parcel of land and knows the comfort of "his own vine and fig tree" in a village of neighbors similarly blessed and huddling together for protection? If so, the chances are that, poor as he is, he is still heeding the ancient injunction given to Israel in the Levitical code: "Neither shalt thou gather the fallen fruit of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and for the sojourner." We cannot but hope that this good man has provided his vineyard with a leafy watchtower, by which to protect himself from the too greedy appetites of these same sojourners who are allowed to consume what they can on the spot, but not to carry plundered fruits away.

But probably he is no nearer real proprietorship than the landless *fellahin* of neighboring Egyptian cotton fields. But whether he be hireling or master, it is patent that someone has been observing the rules laid down by Christ for the good husbandman, who "cleanseth" the branch "that it may bear more fruit." Like the great-voiced angel of Revelation, he has "sent forth his sharp sickle and gathered the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe" in Palestine in August.

THE BENT BACK IN SCRIPTURE

The image of the burden-bearer has been perfectly familiar to Palestine people ever since the days when God

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said to the children of Israel, "I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you . . . with an outstretched arm." One has only to go to Egypt to-day and stand before the monumental vastness of pyramids at Gizeh or temples at Thebes or the subterranean burial places of sacred bulls at Sakkara, to appreciate how bent were the backs of human toilers slaving for their construction. Jeremiah, with a mind to reform, bade men "bring no burden through the gates of the city on the Sabbath day" nor carry any forth from their houses. Isaiah, with his passion for social equity, was concerned about "undoing the bands of the yoke," and demolishing the yoke itself, to let the oppressed go free.

Nehemiah, in his graphic description of the rebuilding of Zion's walls, inserts a delightful detail which glows with life, after one has watched Jerusalem toilers, each lifting the load to his brother's back and strapping it there. The prophet remarks of the builders, "They that bare burdens laded themselves." In other words, there was such a shortage of labor that no man would interrupt his companion long enough to seek assistance in setting his load on his back. The sympathetic eye of the poet-psalmist was full of images of the oppressed. "Blessed be the Lord, who daily beareth our burden" (or "loadeth us with benefits"), he cried. The weight of guilt he found the most crushing load of all. The iniquities of the unrighteous man were so great that they stacked up higher than his head.

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"Mine iniquities are gone over my head :
As a heavy burden they are too heavy for me."

And to the psalmist we are indebted for the invitation, "Cast thy burden upon Jehovah, and he will sustain thee."

So when Jesus gave his sweeping invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," the *newness* of his message was not so much in suggesting a spiritual balm for a physical hurt, but in identifying himself, the Galilæan whom they saw and heard, with the unseen Jehovah of ancient Israel. Jesus' use of the burden-bearer image is just another example of his preference for speaking in pictures familiar to every man, woman, and child of his native land.

Has the bold all-inclusiveness of his invitation ever startled you? The one who issues it is either all-powerful or an empty braggart, promising what he cannot supply. *We are driven to his deity.* To how unlimited a number the proffer is extended!—"All ye who labor"—people of every rank and land and century. And what a solace is offered!—"rest," that most desired boon of the East. Rest from the sun, shelter from blinding heat! Rest in the shadow of anything—shadow of a tree, a rock, a house, a camel, a tent—shadow of anything "in a weary land." Herods in Jerusalem and Pharaohs in Egypt had empressed men for labor and drained them of strength. But here was One who

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offered not the lash and then more burdens—but *rest*. Never man so spake. Little wonder Judæa failed to understand.

The bare, swollen feet of our bronzed burden-bearer at the Jaffa Gate and the shabbiness of his long garment attest his inclusion in that great multitude to whom Christ addressed his astounding words. In his day, as in ours, the land abounded in a freight of poor humanity, willing to bend themselves double under burdens never meant for human backs, if only they might wrest from the ill-stocked pantry of the land a few flat loaves of native bread. Small wonder that the Arabs of Palestine loom so tall and throw so gaunt a shadow. They eat little because too often there is little to be eaten. Long treks over dusty roads make simple diet more comfortable. True, since the departure of Turkish control, one can no longer say of the rulers of Jerusalem as Jesus did, “They bind heavy burdens . . . but they themselves will not move them with their finger.” But it will be long before even the beneficent mandate of Great Britain or the social dreams of the Zionists will be able to eliminate such scenes as our burden-bearer presents.

For he is not alone in his right-angled attitude. Often in walking along crowded Christian Street we heard the muffled sound of bare feet running along behind us and a weird cry in Arabic: “Way! Make way! Guard your garments and yourselves. I come!” Then a porter would run by, with six or ten travelers’ valises

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strapped to his uncomplaining back, as he hurried up the steps of David Street and out the Jaffa Gate, where motors relieved him of his load and left him wondering why pilgrims are not more temperate in their curio-collecting propensities.

THE BURDEN OF MOTHERHOOD

A Jerusalem mother carries her little one astride her shoulder, one hand clasping a childish fist and the other jauntily swinging a basket of marketing, with a large bundle of cheese balanced atop her veil. The picture of Mohammedan women and of Jewish boys and men lifting five-gallon "motor spirits" cans of water onto their heads at every safe well, is too familiar to allude to it here. Often we coveted their graceful carriage and erect poise, in such contrast to the slouchy gait of Westerners. And often we marveled that human skulls could resist the crushing pressure of such weights.

THE BURDEN OF CHILDHOOD

But perhaps it is the children of Palestine—and of all the lands of Asia Minor—who suffer most as burden-bearers. Their elders seem to be proceeding on the principle of the ancient maxim, "It is good to lay on burdens when young." Nowhere in the world are child labor laws so badly needed as here. An act forbidding cruelty to boys and girls is more desperately needed than the newly established provision for prevention of cruelty to animals. All credit is due to the Jew-

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ish activities for child care in Jerusalem. The Hadas-sah (Women's Organization of the Zionists) has among its seven baby stations in the city one in which forty per cent of the patients are of Arab blood—and this by stipulation of the benefactor, Mr. Nathan Straus. The orphanage of the Near East Relief, through its superb program of vocational training in pottery making and other lines of native talent has done much to relieve boys and girls from being a burden to themselves.

HUMAN CARRY-ALLS

Waiting for our chauffeur to emerge from a native food bazaar one noon in a Syrian settlement near Beirut, we made a point of observing how many varieties of load passed in a five-minute interval. First came a sleek little gray burro, staggering along under five twelve-foot planks—a fair sized load for a camel. Another soon passed, with six live chickens in a coop strapped to his jogging back. Then a man, with a bundle of rich Kermanshahs balanced on his shoulder—a burden of which we would gladly have relieved him had our purses permitted. Next there passed a man with two enormous baskets of Syrian watermelons so heavy with juice in August. Then a burro meekly transporting a filthy old couch. And then a man calmly advancing down the main street with a complete iron bedstead balanced above his head. An Occidental would have taken it apart and with quick steps gotten it piece by piece to its destination. Not so the Oriental.

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He would walk more slowly and save himself the trouble of taking it apart and putting it together again. Last of all came a detachment of Senegalese soldiers in red fez and khaki, marching toward a rest camp after service against the Druses at Damascus or in the fresh-est quarrel of France with Morocco. Theirs was the *burden of war*—the most grievous of all the world's burdens.

EAST OF GIBRALTAR

The tendency of Mediterranean peasantry to make themselves beasts of burden is noticeable as soon as one enters the gateway of the Wonder Sea at Gibraltar—or even before, if he tarries at Madeira, set like a many-colored jewel in the sea-green filigree of mid-Altantic. Here everyone carries a basket, whether it be the dainty basket of an affianced native on her way to the mission for help with her trousseau; or a swinging Portuguese sailor from a government ship, carrying his bathing suit to the surf in a yellow basket; or a bent “pater familias” returning up the terraced slope of the mountain, with a market hamper crammed with queer “marble fish” and small pink Madeira bananas for the women of his household, who sit at their embroidery in gardens aglow with “lily-bird” flowers, golden acacias, heliotrope, roses, persimmon trees and flaming poinsettias. Funchal people do not even stare at the sight of a sturdy native woman advancing along the main thoroughfare near the Public Gardens with six

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handsome new wicker chairs stacked high above her head. Nor does anyone even pity the men who give visitors thrills by running four miles down the mountain holding back their passengers in sledge-baskets with ropes, only to climb four miles back up the cobbled path with their sledges inverted over their heads and do the same thing for another pair of tourists.

Coming east to Spain, one finds no native who scruples to load his donkey with unimaginable weights. Was ever creature so sleepy-eyed as the Granada donkey? The last sound we heard at night in the streets near the cathedral where Isabella and Ferdinand sleep was the clatter of small donkey hoofs, being driven into the courtyard and unsaddled for a few hours' rest. And no matter how early we ventured forth in the morning, the burro was already at work, with huge red earthenware jars of water strapped to him while his master plaintively urged upon the public, with raucous, thirsty cry, "Agua! Agua!"—in a needlessly thirsty mountain land at the very base of the snowy Sierra Nevadas. In many a Moorish village of Andalusia we saw Don Quixotes prodding donkeys bearing the scriptural "mule's load" of fertile earth from dried mountain streams to hillside vineyards, as in the days when Naaman insisted upon rewarding Elisha with at least "two mules' burden of earth."

One of the most picturesque figures remaining on the cosmopolitan bridge linking the Pera Quarter of Constantinople with old Stamboul, is the "hamal," or

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pack-horse porter. He is one of the last types along the Golden Horn to resist the standardization of Mustapha Kemal's new costume. In baggy trousers and red slippers he jostles the crowd made up of many nations, the same old bearded and bronzed "hamal" his father was, even though he has doffed his fez. Centuries of bending under loads have led him to devise a small saddle, which he places on his hips to facilitate his transportation of freight. He is thus enabled to carry five bushels of artichokes on his back with hands clasped before him in meditation or fingering a string of old amber prayer-beads. The position of his saddle corresponds to the yoke borne by oxen and cattle and gives illumination to Christ's words, which the poor "hamal" has probably never heard: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The taking on of a yoke does not *increase* the load, but lightens its carrying. Christ's yoke does not subjugate its wearer, in the sense in which the Romans of Cæsar's time spoke of bringing their captives *sub jugum*, under the yoke. It guarantees that it will be easier, easier because of the divine Yoke-Fellow, easier because One is in authority to whom the oppressed cries out, "Take thou the reins, and do thou drive and guide me!"

CAPITAL AS A BEARER OF BURDENS

Economists and Western investors promoting the Zionist Movement from their interest-bearing surplus

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point to capital as the thing which will lift the burden from the backs of Palestine people. They offer trucks for such loads as our Hebron grape-porter is carrying and for natives themselves, they prescribe a "Ford" as a panacea for foot soreness. And when one sees how many Arabs in flying white garments can crowd onto the running board and into the tonneau of motors America would have discarded long before, one is convinced that the citizens of Judæa have a liking for this swift-speeding load-lifter.

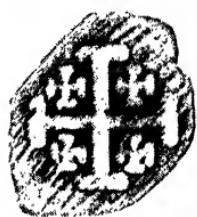
But capital alone cannot be Palestine's burden-bearer. It alone cannot bring rest to the Eastern world. Too often in the Western world it has brought only increased restlessness. The *liberating spirit* of the great Burden-Bearer must be given entrance to Zion. For it is only he who is able to relieve all the sore pressure-points—financial, social, spiritual.

In every family, East and West, there is one individual who is burden-bearer for the whole group; some good-natured brother, sister, father or mother who silently endures tremendous anxiety and strain, finding time always for one more demand, being loaded with one more weight, often with a Christlike unawareness that he is carrying any at all. Quite as much as our vender of grapes, these have "borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat," heeding not Paul's injunction, that "each man shall bear his own burden," but incarnating rather the diviner urge, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

It is easy to be superficial in seeing Jerusalem, so "compactly builded together" that her streets and squares and covered passageways seem more like rooms and halls in a rambling old house than parts of a city. Even after one has become familiar with the hills on which she is set and with the little thoroughfares which divide her four quarters into a sort of huge Jerusalem cross in each of which the cross itself has a different symbolism, according to the faith of its citizens—Moslem, Jewish, Christian, and Armenian; even after one can find his way after night-fall through desolate streets so thronged by day, it is quite possible that he is not *aware* of Jerusalem. Her soul and her significances are submerged in the centuries and must be unearthed by each traveler for himself.

Of no other section of the city is this more true than at the Citadel, inside the Jaffa Gate, facing the only open square large enough to accommodate the miscellaneous market of Oriental stuffs daily retailed there. One may gaze and gaze at the ancient masonry of the massive Tower of David, without being aware that a mosque and minaret and a dismantled "keep" inside would reward his attention; or without realizing that the Tower of David is only one of seven towers making up the Citadel, like the "Seven Towers" of Constantinople which were so long an effective defense of the infant Christianity against Moslem force. And unless



CRUSADER'S CROSS
(See map lining back
of book)

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he asks the native guards for admission through the gateway where General Allenby read his epochal proclamation that December day in 1917, he will be wholly unaware of the improvements which the Pro-Jerusalem Society has made in beautifying the great central chamber of the Tower of David for an exhibition room, or of a similar transformation in the Hippicus Tower—formerly a war-hospital for spotted fever victims.

AT “THE GATE OF THE FRIEND”

The fascinating details of current life, ever thronging through the Jaffa Gate, absorb the attention of the pilgrim as they do our women at the Tower. How little these think of the procession that passed their resting place twenty centuries ago and took the ravine road south to Bethlehem—a modest group of footsore man, uncomplaining donkey and wide-eyed, weary woman who bore under her heart the destiny of the nations. Still less are these peasants aware that a gateway, a wall, and a citadel—potentially at least—have marked this ancient hill top of Judæa since the day of Solomon. It belongs in significance with the Acropolis at Athens, the Acrocorinthus Rock of Corinth, the heights of Edinburgh and of Quebec, and the Vaux ramparts at Verdun, as one of those *high places* of history, destined for contention through many generations.

Tumult of war, capture, and refortification have made up the record of this spot whose very stones cry

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out with significance under the unwitting feet of our simple daughters of Jerusalem. Manasseh strengthened it, Nebuchednezzar captured it. Tumultuous Zedekiah's faithful men made valiant defense here, yielding inch by inch to the Babylonians. The great Alexander claimed it peaceably; with loyal patriots Judas Macabeus repaired it; crusaders coveted it until they marched by in victory and returned in rout. Turks kept barracks there through the centuries until Allenby claimed the Citadel for Christianity in the month of Christ. Such have been the vicissitudes of this parcel of high ground between Jaffa Gate and Zion's Gate, from Abram to Allenby. The crude, massive masonry of the lower portions of the Tower of David justifies belief in at least a pre-mediæval antiquity. Indeed, it is believed by the former Director of Excavations of the Palestine and Exploration Fund, Dr. R. A. S. Macalister, that Christ himself looked on some of the stones we see to-day in the lower courses of the Tower of David, which, together with other portions of the Citadel which protected the Palace of Herod, was allowed to survive the siege of 70 A. D. When one considers them, he feels the fulfillment of Isaiah's words, "Behold, I lay in Zion a foundation; a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, of sure foundation."

Our women lingering in such an environment as this are possibly citizens of a peasant village on the outskirts of Jerusalem, who come so frequently up to their capital that they feel "at ease in Zion." They have an

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air of proprietorship such as we feel when we run down to Washington or up to London. They are not farm laborers—far fewer women farm in Palestine than in central Europe—but find their chief tasks in “looking well to the ways of their household.” From their little measure of leisure they delight to make those squares and bands of red embroidery—with an occasional bright bead sewed in as concession to “the evil eye”—with which they trim their flowing gowns of blue. Sometimes they manage to embroider a few extra pieces, to sell to the merchants of Jerusalem.

How the habits of these simple women of modern Judæa make the ancient words of proverbial wisdom live and move and have meaning for us. Of each of them it may be said with all likelihood of truth,

“She maketh linen garments and selleth them,
And delivereth girdles unto the merchant.”

Perhaps she too has come to seek “wool and flax,” and, like the merchant ships, “bringeth her bread from afar.” Doubtless she has risen “also while it is yet night,” to give “food to her household.” Her simple garb does not lead us to believe that the fruit of her hands will be sufficient for her to consider a field or plant a vineyard. But from her absorption in the examination of whatever she has bought at the open market or in one of the little shops near the Jaffa Gate, “she perceiveth that her merchandise is profitable.”

The graceful creature at the extreme left of the

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group is counting her "piasters." The second is corroborating her result. The third is calling attention to some favorite "carob" seeds bought at the food bazaar; while the other two are considering their resources for a certain vessel of burnished copper coveted from the coppersmith's stall. Already she has placed a round pad on the crown of her head, to facilitate balancing it there. Meantime, all are enjoying their favorite diversion—gossip. Conversation is available to even the lowliest Oriental. He feeds upon it. "They that sit in the gate talk," remarked the psalmist. And daughters of Jerusalem have been "talking things over" ever since a little maid in the high priest's house on Mount Zion taunted Peter. And always they will, whether Briton or Arab, Turk or Jew, controls the Citadel.

GOTHIC GRACE

Artists who have never been to Palestine would scarcely believe that the photograph at the beginning of this chapter was not specially posed. So full of unconscious grace are the women, that one could readily draw from them models for a group of "Wise and Foolish Virgins." Yet these women will never know that they were photographed. Only a hundred feet away a Moslem mother had huddled up in her black cape and drawn her veil more tightly before our lens. Even generous "baksheesh" did not persuade her. Daughters of Zion are haughty," we agreed with Isaiah. And all during our stay in Jerusalem we had difficulty with

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Moslem women walking quickly out of focus, lest we who possessed their image, might possess also mastery over their spirit. This same superstition prevails among many Christians and is a matter of religious scruple among pious Jews.

Consider the easy pose of the sister resting so easily on the wall of the moat. There is a Gothic grandeur about the clean-cut lines of her limbs and arms; a severity, a becoming gauntness; a Gothic height, equilibrium and dignified calm, an accentuation of outline often come upon in the people, the hills, the animals, and even the old olive trees of Holy Lands. The folds of the second woman's veil seem like a piece of realistic mediæval sculpture rather than cotton cloth. The outstretched hand of the third and the relaxed, easy silhouette of the fourth are full of grace which is born of centuries of leisurely procedure and of erect carriage under head-borne burdens.

We wonder if the psalmist had observed these almost "architectural" traits when he spoke of such daughters as "cornerstones hewn after the fashion of a palace." Notice their dress. "Strength and dignity" are their garments. Even if the ample folds of stout blue wool absorb too much Palestine dust for health, they are at least a good illustration of Paul's "modest apparel" which is an adornment. The costume of a Palestine woman tells something about herself—which is more than one can say of the standardized modes of her Western sister. The Rebekah costume of Jerusalem

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is known by its sash of gayly striped silk; its bolero jacket worn over the embroidered white garment; by its flower-bordered veil hanging to the ankles and its simple head-band of coins fastened under the chin with tinkling ornaments. The garb of the Christian girl of Ramallah is recognized by its halo of many coins fitted one against another in overlapping layers and by a heavily cross-stitched veil which is the pride of its wearer. Maidens can afford to spend their early years in the creation of such an artistic garment, for its fashion will outlast their lives.

JUDÆAN "MODES"

There is nothing dainty about the summer costume of a Palestine woman. "Soft raiment" seems as unpopular to-day as it was when Jesus exclaimed of John the Baptist: "What went ye out to see? . . . Behold, they that wear soft *raiment* are in kings' houses." Heavy wool, layer upon layer, is a sure defense against the burning sun and a healthful protection against those sudden changes of temperature that come when one drops down into the coolness of a wady or ascends by abrupt paths onto sun-baked slopes. Three sensible features of these women's garb attract us: their full white veils so becomingly adjusted, protecting their necks from the perils of the noon-day; their stout, loose shoes for stony roads; and the cheery introduction of color into the ornamentation of their gowns, as though to offset the somber monotones of Judæan landscapes.

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Even in Old Testament times, maidens of Jerusalem were recognized by such touches. Of unfortunate Tamar, Samuel the prophet wrote, "She had a garment of divers colors upon her, for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins appareled."

From the stained condition of many dusty robes met in Palestine, one would conclude that women are literally carrying out Christ's injunction to take no extra garment or to have any thought what they shall wear on the morrow. Why should they have many gowns, when styles have not changed much since the Middle Ages among peasants of Palestine? A Bethlehem woman will buy a modern straw hat for her little boy but will virtuously cling to the high white headdress made of a veiled "tarboosh" which came in with Frankish crusades. In a land where water, even under the British mandate and Zionist reform influences, is still too precious to waste for laundry purposes, these women have gone to as unsanitary an extreme as we Westerners have gone to a fastidious extreme of extravagance.

WOMEN OF THE MULTITUDE

Just such women as these, with attention ready for any unusual event disturbing the monotony of their daily routine, came with the excited multitude from Bethany and Bethphage on Palm Sunday, tearing branches from wayside trees, crowding perhaps through the Golden Gate of the eastern wall, crying with a loud voice, "*Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of*

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the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." One of their kind, too, it was who at the height of Christ's ministry made bold to exclaim in the midst of a multitude, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the breasts which thou didst suck." Great must have been the surprise of this flatterer, aiming at public commendation from the Great Teacher, when she received Christ's trenchant rebuke: "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."

Such voices as theirs, too, joined in the chorus outside the Praetorium on the Way of the Cross: "Crucify him!" To such as these, too, loitering about Jerusalem in the early morning of Easter, came Mary from the garden tomb, which was not very far away from David's Tower, whichever site we accept for Calvary.

It is pleasing to think also that it was such women as these who swelled the great multitude that "bewailed and lamented him," as Christ laid his cross on sturdy Simon, lately come in from the country; and who heard the Master say as he turned to them:

"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold, the days are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck."

The cause for woman's weeping did not pass with the terrific siege of Jerusalem thus prophesied by Christ. Many later sieges were to follow. Forty times has the city changed hands; twenty-two times been be-

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sieged. Even to-day, when Palestine is a peaceful state under the mandate of a tactful Christian nation, its streets are still haunted by wretched women attempting to give suck to infants from "breasts that never gave suck." Blessed be all the milk stations and baby clinics established by Zionists in Old Jerusalem! Yet the picture given by Ezekiel still remains too accurate a likeness of many an unfortunate madonna of Zion:

"The young children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city.

They say to their mothers, 'Where is grain and wine?'
When they swoon as the wounded in the streets of the city,

When their soul is poured out into their mother's bosom."

In a shadowy corner just where Christian Street joins David Street, under the flickering gloom of an old Turkish lamp attached to a house-wall, we saw just such a scene as this—a pitiful daughter of Jerusalem sitting on the heartless stones of the city, offering semblance of nourishment to a dirty and emaciated baby.

To such as these Jesus, turning, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

A MAGDALENE ASLEEP

It was while following a fascinating camel train laden with packs from Damascus, as it tinkled its way up and down the less frequented by-streets of the city

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one afternoon, that we came upon a daughter of Jerusalem who had even greater cause for weeping over her state. We had been wondering on just which elevation David had built his house of Tyrian cedar on whose roof he delighted to walk at evening near the bathing place of Bathsheba when we almost stumbled over a woman sleeping among a pile of empty boxes. Her soiled white veil was wrapped about her and her head rested on arms which were spread out over the great burden she had been carrying. No better portrait of a sleeping Magdalene could have been painted in the first century than the one our faithful kodak carried away of this exhausted creature of the street who had thrown herself onto the hot stones of the heartless city, in the shadow of an old wall. For an Oriental can sleep anywhere that he finds shade—under a boat on the shore of Galilee, in the cool darkness of a Bethany cave, in the shadow cast by a cart or by a house. I remember seeing leafy booths erected on the housetops of wretched Magdala and shady watchtowers roofed with twigs in open fields. When the psalmist and Isaiah spoke of "the shadow of a rock in a weary land," and said, "Jehovah is thy shade," they spoke to the people in a most comforting image. There was an easily appreciated hospitality in the invitation of the bramble in Jo-tham's fable, when "the bramble said to the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and take refuge in my shade." Christ's description of the prodigious mustard plant must have come pleasantly upon

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the ears of his hearers by the sea, who delighted in picturing anything that “putteth out great branches; so that the birds of the heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof.”

No self-respecting Palestinian woman would sleep among the débris of Jerusalem any more than her Western sister would in Battery Park. Dirt and poverty are always the lot of such friendless ones. In the west, their red, cracked hands peer from black garments as they sit on park benches blinking at the welcome dawn and reach for the warmth of the sun. In Jerusalem they crawl into the shade. Such a forlorn one as we beheld may have come as innocently as did Mary from little Magdala by Gennesaret, to the city which is “the great harlot.” The words of Jesus in the Bethany house of Simon the leper came to our minds as we left her, with a great pity in our hearts: “Why trouble ye the woman? . . . Ye have the poor always with you.” And we understood why it is that a city-dwelling publican named Matthew, familiar with such types as this, is the only Gospel writer who describes the incident.

A city’s poor are constantly in need of Christ’s full-orbed ministry of restoration—economic, social, spiritual. It is little wonder that he approached the city of tragedy with dread. Everyone does, approaching it from lyric Nazareth.

A VIRGIN DAUGHTER OF JERUSALEM

But we shall not take leave of the Daughters of Jeru-

CHAPTER VIII

THE MERCHANT OF THE MURISTAN

(See Frontispiece)

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls."

EVERY Near-Easterner has a bent for trinkets and trappings. Bright things have always charmed his fancy—"jewels of gold and jewels of silver and raiment" and all the "precious things" selected by tasteful Isaac for his betrothed Rebekah in Genesis days. Moses shrewdly recognized this propensity and allowed the children of Israel on the eve of their departure from Egypt to "ask every one jewels of his neighbor"—a going away gift, as it were.

Into the building of the Temple went a Palestinian penchant for fine gold, pomegranates on chains and thrones of ivory which the merchants of Solomon's day as well as the kings of Arabia and the governors of the country, had a share in bringing up to Jerusalem in an era when "silver was nothing accounted of." As late as the date of Saint John's Revelation on Patmos emphasis was still laid on "fine linen, bright and pure," and a city whose foundation walls were adorned with sapphires, jasper and pearls—and all this in apparent

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forgetfulness of Christ's emphasis upon a simple way of life and a worship-form that stresses "spirit and truth" rather than ornateness.

The Oriental's taste for "things" may be a subconscious hold-over from purely pagan tastes. Being a relatively simple-minded man, free from the complexities that confuse his Western brother, he likes what he can actually see. One might just as well try to separate the geometrical designs of a Beloochistan rug from the wine-richness of its tones as to separate an Oriental from his color-lust and his craving for richness of effect. The very monotony of the land-tints encourages him in this. His camels and his donkeys he decks with bells, wool-trimmed harness, and strings of bright glass beads designed to tempt the evil eye of envy away from the creature to his luring ornaments. If he be a non-Moslem Palestinian, he adorns his women with bracelets, rings, and headdresses of tinkling coin. Himself he arrays in garments striped with color or in the shimmering silks which so become the Arab sheik. The very lowest type of humanity we ever came upon—Bedouins camping where the gummy waters of the Dead Sea washed their tent-poles—wore amulets of bone and bracelets of brass. And we saw those most destitute of Near-Easterners—girl orphans at the palace of the Druse Jimblat Pasha in Sidon—turn instinctively to glass bracelets for their younger protégées when given a few "piasters" to spend in the shops of the old Phœnician city.

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A SELLER OF ALL KINDS OF WARES

For such native tastes, native stalls like our merchant's in the frontispiece supply satisfaction. It is not stocked with costly intaglios, Arab seal-rings, pre-Christian jewels, Allenby chains, slave bracelets, silks from the Lebanons, and rugs from Tabriz. These are to be found in more ambitious shops near the Jaffa Gate or in the newer Jerusalem outside the city walls. Our merchant in his tiny cave on traditional Calvary caters, rather, to the simpler tastes of people of Jerusalem. His wares are a miscellany of all manner of pleasant things—beads of olive wood, mother-of-pearl stars, a rug or two, canes and bracelets, riding whips, oil lanterns, Turkish swords, and even modern asbestos pads to protect the housewife's flat bread-cakes from the heat of her charcoal stove. They make up such a conglomeration as Nehemiah had to deal with when chastising those "sellers of all kinds of wares" who, when kept out of the city on the Sabbath, loitered outside the wall and were threatened by the hand of the reformer himself.

In America to-day a shop like our merchant's would have a red front and a familiar caption over its lintel. Its proprietor has not only literally "put all his goods into his shop window" but has placed *himself* there as well. What a convenience not to have to rise to serve customers or to weary his bare feet trailing them through spacious display rooms! Our merchant prefers to sit among his wares.

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No Western retina can register the details of such a shop as this. No Western vocabulary can do justice to its contents. The prophet Ezekiel must often have gazed on just such displays—and more elaborate ones—for when he came to describe Tarshish as playing the rôle of merchant to Tyre he remembers a “multitude of all kinds of riches,” “horns of ivory and ebony . . . emeralds, purple, and broidered work and fine linen, and coral, and rubies . . . bright iron . . . precious cloths for riding . . . wrappings of blue . . . chests of rich apparel.” Nothing that he here enumerates is less dear to the Easterner now than it was in Old Testament times.

The merchant in our picture is plainly a mystic. More than an individual, he is a type of Islamic repose. The meditative expression of his good bronzed face and the far-away dreaming of his deep-set eyes may be duplicated in every town of the Levant. Bearded with dignity, never seeking a quarrel, placidly resigned, at peace with things as they are, he is a perfect symbol of his religion. We came upon his like in Constantinople once, sitting on a raised platform in the courtyard of the Mosque of Eyub, washing amber prayer-beads with attar of roses as he swayed in rhythm with the muezzin’s call. Again we found him squatting on the damp floor of a rotting wooden food shop in the Pera quarter surrounded by “Turkish delight” in the form of watermelons, with the star and crescent nailed above his head.

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A DREAMER IN THE DUST

The simple white turban and the prevalence of mosque photographs among his wares stamp our merchant-dreamer as an orthodox Moslem. If Allah wills that he should make a sale, well and good. If not, "ma besay-it?" (What does it matter?) What is left from to-day will be stock for to-morrow, and he will be spared the trouble of seeking more wares. Cross-legged and unsandaled, he sits displaying his goods but never urging them upon anyone. The man with his hand upon the showcase may not even be a customer at all. Perhaps he has come to whisper of a "pearl of great price" lately come into the city from the bazaars of Egypt or the interior of Russia. Perhaps he has just come to discuss Great Britain's plan for improvements at the Damascus Gate; or to lament the rumored arrival of another Zionist colony in the Plain of Esdraelon; or to sigh for the return of Turkish rule with dirtier streets but lower taxes. Every political straw blows into the wide-open shops of Jerusalem, which combine the function of newspaper, social center, and market. To encourage his customers to rest and gossip our merchant has placed an inverted box on the pavement. As for himself, he shrewdly "lends every man his ear, but few, his voice."

All the sounds of Jerusalem are familiar to him: the dusty-throated braying of the city's overladen donkeys in rebellion against their loads; the music of Damascus camel-bells coming up to Zion; the despairing

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step and the hot-tempered complaint of the leper passing on his way to the sunny steps of a church; the endless cry of the blind man outside Saint John's Hotel, with a hungry child to guide him; the tapping of Moslem maces on the stones as dignitaries escort priestly processions to the celebration of the mass; and the pleasanter sound of a good Arab father talking with his little son as he leads him on a donkey past the shop. Even the clangorous clashings of contradictory bells on the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, just around the corner, he hears. But sweetest to his Moslem ear is the cry of the "Muezzin" on the Mosque of Omar behind his shop.

This is one reason why he clings to this location. While Turkey was master he was there; when Allenby came he remained. He loves to feel his ear-drums tingle with the painful weirdness of that desert-call and to thank Allah five times daily, that he is not as the infidels are, contending among themselves for rights within the ivory ruin called by Christians their holiest of holies. What cares he, whether Helena's Cave of the Crosses, the Center of the Earth, the Stone of Uncction, the Chapel of the Casting of Lots, or even the Altar of Calvary are correctly identified within? What cares he that crusading hosts once foregathered here in the courtyard? To him it matters more that the good Caliph Omar spread his prayer mat in front of this Christian sanctuary when he was too considerate a conqueror to pray within.

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Yet we cannot think that his motive in locating his shop here was purely religious. His stall is in an excellent location to draw patronage from worshipers on their way from the Holy Sepulcher. For this Mûristân section of Jerusalem has through the centuries had a twofold significance. It was the scene of a lively ministry to pilgrims on the part of the Knights Hospitaller and other benevolent brotherhoods of the romantic Middle Age. But it was also then, as now, the heart of the chief bazaars of the city. In the basement of the Greek Convent of Abraham near our merchant's shop, a long, vaulted room, now used as a refectory for pilgrims, is pointed out as an ancient bazaar. It is claimed that this originally was in "Palmers' Street," whose name identifies it with crusaders.

Jerusalem's main bazaar to-day lies on the east side of the Mûristân and the newer one, in its western section. One of its interesting portions is the old corn market on David Street, where grain is not sold in sacks or bags already weighed at the mill, but is measured out in true scriptural fashion to each customer as he comes along, that he may see with his own eyes that his acquisition is really a "golden rule" purchase, "good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over."

ORIENTAL SHOPS AS CHURCH-SUBSIDIES

In a day when American churches are stressing "in-

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come-producing features," it is interesting to observe in the roofed-over bazaar section of this same "Street of Small Public Markets" mediæval marks on old stone buildings indicating that some of these twelfth-century shops paid their rents to religious brotherhoods or to such organizations as Saint Anne's Abbey. "The Dark Ages" were not so dark in some respects as the historian has led us to believe, for the same method of church finance was employed also in Constantinople in the eleven hundreds, when Justinian was emperor. Here, eleven thousand shops contributed to the upkeep of Sancta Sophia, with its staff of a thousand people, including ten bishops and eight hundred priests. And even Islam, which has generally been characterized as unprogressive, used the same idea in the sixteenth century, when the Grand Vizier Roustem Pasha built a mosque in Constantinople whose first story was arranged for shops, the rents of which were to contribute to the upkeep of the place of prayer.

A MULTITUDE OF MERCHANTS

Often in Palestine we marveled that so many petty tradesmen could earn a livelihood in small communities. As far back as the days of Nahum it was complained of Nineveh that she had multiplied her merchants "above the stars of heaven." Perhaps this was one cause of her downfall. Yet each tradesman in that part of the world feeds on the patronage of his neighbor. In the refugee camp at Beirut to-day an Arme-

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nian mother will pull together a few boards, gasoline cans, and corrugated roofing to make a house and shop; acquire a few piastres' worth of merchandise; sell it to her friends; buy more and soon have herself established with enough trade to buy her children food. The factor of specialization enters largely into the economics of Near-Eastern merchants. A department store is almost unheard of in Asia Minor. The seller of sweet-meats spends at the silk merchant's; the maker of Jerusalem filigree visits the vender of eggplants and Jaffa oranges. Just as Cairo has her perfume bazaar, her shoe bazaar, her jewelers' market, so in an humbler way, the "city of the great King" has her coppersmiths' section, her cloth-merchants' stand, her bread-stalls. And in the Moslem quarter tiny shops are literally packed with brilliant silk "khafiyehs," "abas," and all the other articles comprising the full regalia of a prosperous sheik. That Jerusalem's silver and goldsmiths were important citizens even in Old Testament times is very evident, for Nehemiah records that in restoring the walls of Zion "one of the goldsmiths" repaired "unto the house of the Nethinim, and of the merchants, over against the gate of Hammiphkad, and to the ascent of the corner. And between the ascent of the corner and the sheep gate repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants."

"AN ARAB BARGAIN"

I have sometimes wondered whether natives "bar-

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gain" among themselves or whether this delightful occupation is reserved for visitors who would frankly be disappointed if deprived of the pleasure of telling their friends, "I finally got the price down to less than one-half of what he originally asked." Silken robes, gold-embroidered in designs worthy of the patriarch of Jerusalem, are acquired at prices within the reach of American school-teachers. Beads are there—two handfuls, strung, for an American paper dollar. For this bit of green is literally cried for, all around the Levant, having greater value at the banks than gold or silver.

But do not think the treasures of the bazaars are lightly to be come upon. The process of "bargaining," of stalking indignantly out into the street, ejaculating that the superb silken prayer rug of one's choice is not worth a fraction of the piasters" demanded, shopping from dealer to dealer and back again, of seeing dozens of rich Kermanshahs and Royal Shiraz of Cashmir design taken down from their piles by "slaves of the lamp" and spread out in the narrow street for better inspection; the sipping of Persian tea insistently proffered in tall amber glasses; the tearful protests of the "persecuted" merchants; the pleading to "shake hands and make an Arab bargain"—all these are the ingredients that make up the real spice of the Oriental market. This matter of the "Arab bargain" is an interesting process. The merchant means by it, something like this: "Shake hands with me and then I will name to you the lowest price at which I will sell the rug." The

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result is generally predestined from the start: the shrewd American walks off with his prayer rug tucked under his arm, at a price just half the original asking; and the dealer folds together a few more American paper dollars than he hoped for at best. But his sweat-beaded brow, his physical exhaustion from the dramatic effort involved, his pleading, his persuasion, his recital of the rug's particular charms, his oath-sworn guarantee of its antiquity, vindicate his conscience in the eyes of Allah. Allah has willed that he should sell the rug at a good price.

CHRIST AND THE MERCHANT

It is not difficult to understand how a man like our Merchant of the Mûristân could be led to sell "all that he hath" to buy one pearl of great price.

In the first place, the lure of a single flawless gem easily captivates the connoisseur. Moreover, the merchandise of such a shop as this, as well as of the one in Christ's parable, is small enough to be quickly disposed of. Why should one ever carry a large stock, when fresh wares are easily available from the rich peripatetic traders who ransack Arabia and Egypt and the recesses of Persia to bring out their wealth on camel back? And who that has seen a leisurely camel train led by a humble donkey has not longed to waylay it and peer into the bulging sacks? Would you not like to explore the cargo of the one which, in our chapter frontispiece, is winding its way to the Jaffa Gate?

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Everyone along the caravan routes of Galilee turns trader for the moment, whenever a customer rolls into sight. This merchandising instinct has doubtless been acquired by seeing camel trains pass generation after generation along routes that were ancient in the boyhood of Christ. For what lad of Palestine has not delighted to count the camels even as his American cousins count freight-cars along mid-Western railroads?

Our imagination leaps as we think of those richer merchants of old—princes, whose “traffickers were the honorable of the earth”; merchants who in Isaiah’s day passed over the sea to replenish their stock for the inhabitants of the coast; merchants whose ships brought their goods “from afar.”

In addition to his parable of the pearl, Christ makes another allusion to the merchant as a type of the East. It occurs in his story of the slighted wedding invitation. The men who were bidden to the feast “made light of it, and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his merchandise.” This prompt return to the shop was typical. Christ well knew the psychology of his countrymen. The merchant has a personal attachment to his wares. Early and late he broods over them, pulling down his shutters only for the hot-noon siesta and the nightfall and for his Sabbath—which is Friday if he be Moslem, Saturday if he be Jew, and Sunday if he be Christian Palestinian. I have seen rug merchants display a rich old Kermanshah at a tempting price and then turn pale with regret, lest the offer be accepted.

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Yet, together with this attachment to his wares, he has a paradoxical inability to resist a definite offer. An Oriental will sell anything for which he sees a potential customer. Everything he has is on the market. I have even seen a pious Moslem in one of the most conservative mosques of all Islam hand over for a single American paper dollar the antique amber beads on which he was praying when interrupted by a grasping Christian—beads which had grown smooth and golden with the petitions of a life time. And did not ancient merchants of Midian—those nomadic Arab traders plying between Palestine and Egypt in Jacob's day—sell for twenty pieces of silver even a *living lad* lifted from a wayside pit at Dothan? What a foreshadowing of the later bargain of a traitor-trader in Gethsemane—the Iscariot!

In the carefully tabulated list of merchandise catalogued by the writer of Revelation in his lament of the merchants of fallen Babylon there is this gripping climax: silk, scarlet, spice, incense, wine, wheat, cattle, sheep, *horses, chariots, slaves* and the “SOULS OF MEN.”

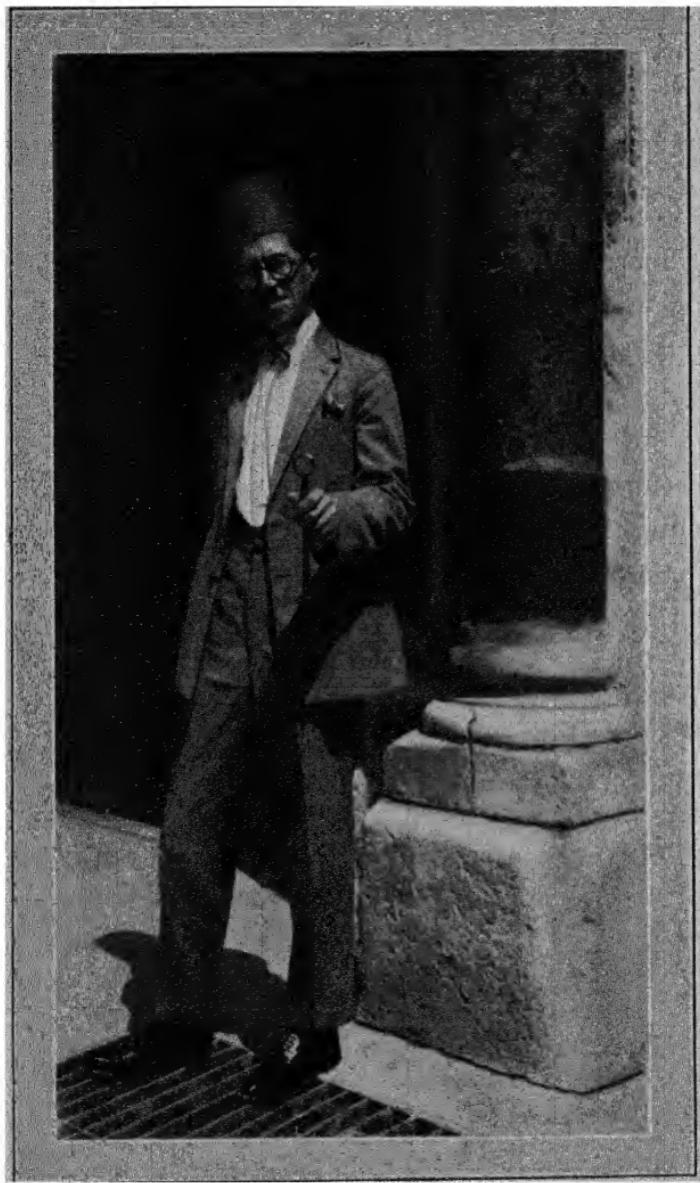
There is nothing new about the protest of modern industry against war. “The merchants of all these things” in ruined Babylon stood far off and mourned, “for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.” They wailed that “one so richly arrayed was so suddenly made desolate.” There is every reason for our Jerusalem merchant and all merchants to be men of peace.

We do not envy our mystic merchant of Jerusalem

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his location in the very heart of the Holy City, with the towers on the Mount of Olives visible through a narrow opening between neighboring buildings. His wares we do not covet at all. But we do wish for ourselves something he has, yet cannot sell; something we covet, yet cannot buy: the placid calm of his strong, bronzed face; a measure of his peaceful adjustment to his environment; and a portion of his leisure for meditation. These are his pearls of greatest price. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" "He that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat; . . . without money and without price."





MOSLEM CUSTODIAN OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER

CHAPTER IX

THE KEEPER OF THE KEY

"Behold, I have set before thee a door opened, which none can shut."

JERUSALEM is golden this morning. We have been awake since three o'clock, and now at five have risen because the sounds of dayspring in the Holy City have driven sleep from our eyes.

Outside our little balcony the light wind of the foredawn is playing through the leaf-laden branches of a tree—so rarely come upon in this city of solid masonry. We know not "whence it cometh and whither it goeth," but, like Nicodemus on his Jerusalem house-top, we "hear the voice thereof" and are refreshed. Through an aperture in the Via Dolorosa itself, as it terminates in the Mûristân near the Holy Sepulcher Church, we see a bit of the green slope of Olivet, now catching the first salute of this golden morning. What "radiancy of glory . . . what bliss beyond compare"!

THE MUSIC OF THE DAWN

Yet it is the *sounds* that we have been hearing in the late night watches, "when morning cometh," that have so stirred us. From these alone, even a totally blind man

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could perceive that, as Paul said of Athens, "in all things," Jerusalem is "very religious."

Friday being one of the three Sabbaths observed in the city—the Mohammedan—the day of worship began about three o'clock, while the little city lay asleep in the dark. For at that hour, a muezzin mounted the minaret of the Mosque of Omar, just outside our window, and with a magnificent voice that must have stirred all Jerusalem gave the most elaborate call to prayer we had yet heard. In addition to the customary, "Come to prayer, come to prayer! Population, come to prayer. Prayer is better than sleep!" he added a chapter of the Koran in which from time to time we could distinguish the well accentuated "Al-lah, Al-lah."

By the time he had finished we were so open-eyed that we felt all Jerusalem must be abroad—unless they were too accustomed to his cry. There is a fervid fearlessness in this flinging out of the faith of Islam to the wings of heaven above the housetops of even mixed populations. Its bold enunciation which takes regard of no one, challenges our admiration. The Moslem has no fear of expressing himself in the presence of his rival religionists. He is a propagandist *par excellence*. He does more than shout *from* the housetops. He shouts *above* them.

After the muezzin had ceased his ecstatically painful cry, the little city lapsed into utter silence again, until we heard the slow clump, clumping of an old man—a loosely sandaled old man, a pious, leisurely, Oriental old

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man,—tapping his way along the cobbled street with his staff to go through his ablutions and personal prayers in the mosque before the early service. We could not help wondering if it might be our Merchant of the Mûristân, whose little shop was just around the corner.

At five o'clock a riotously discordant chiming of church bells began, led off by the unmistakable matin message of the heavy-throated one in the twelfth-century tower of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, just across a tiny garden from us.

There were Latin bells and Greek bells; Armenian bells and German. There were Assumptionist bells and White Fathers' bells; Sisters of Zion bells and Carmelite bells, with Hospice bells and orphanage bells and convent bells *all* chiming in. It seemed as though every sect with headquarters in Jerusalem were trying to outshine the other, and the whole result was a confused clanging of contradictory tones. Had Edgar Allan Poe ever been in Jerusalem at dawn, he would have added another stanza to his poem:

Listen to the wrangling of the bells,
Jangling bells, Jerusalem bells,
As they rivalrously peal,
As they quarrelsomely peal,
Till men's senses reel and reel
From the Holy City's bells,
Bells, bells, bells, bells!

Here indeed was the loveless “clanging brass and tinkling cymbal” which Christ condemned; here, again,

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was that striving for power among his disciples at the very gate of paradise. For within the Church of the Holy Sepulcher all the feuds of rival sects have concentrated their hatreds, while *he stands just outside the door*, finding the key to his sanctuary in the hands of Moslem unbelievers.

By now all Jerusalem was awake. More folks began to shuffle along under our window, chattering in Arabic. Distant donkeys blew dusty brays which sounded like outworn Halloween horns. Despairing Eastern voices waking to another unwelcome day of insufficiencies gave forth those exclamations of resignation which no Westerner can imitate. Somewhere a cock crew.

Another day had dawned over the Holy City.

Where in all this early morning medley of sounds were we to feel voiced our own witness of the Christ? Only in the silence of our hearts; only in the impulse to arise while it was yet night, to set down what I have just been writing; and in the little voice of the wind, bending the willow at our window to its mystic touch.

THE SHRINE OF CHRISTENDOM

There was but one place to which such an experience could lead us that morning: the crumbling old accumulation of buildings—now ivory against the blue Juddæan sky, but blood-rose at evening—the church of the Holy Sepulcher. We wanted to see if there was an actual key in Moslem hands, as real as the Moorish one

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we had seen among the treasures of good Isabella and Ferdinand at Granada, or whether it was only in a figurative sense that people spoke of "the key of the Holy Sepulcher being in Moslem hands," just as Luke spoke figuratively of the "key of knowledge" and Saint John, of "the key of David," and Christ of the "keys of the kingdom of heaven."

Some buildings have invisible inscriptions which are more telling than the chiseled marks of master masons. Such an intangible legend we read that morning over the threshold of the ancient church. Twelfth-century sculptors have carved borders of dentils around the pointed arches of the doors; have left the capitals delicately ornamented with oak-leaves and acorns; and on the lintels have set in bas-relief incidents of Scripture and an allegorical portrayal of the struggle of good and evil. But always when we look either in fact or in memory at that main south door, we shall see carved on the crude stones which block up its eastern half, this indictment in a handwriting which needs no Daniel for interpreter:

"O Jesus, thou art standing
Outside the fast closed door;
In lowly patience waiting
To pass the threshold o'er:
Shame on us, Christian brethren,
His name and sign who bear;
O shame, thrice shame upon us,
To keep him standing there!"

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For the sin of ecclesiastical rivalry keeps him excluded from his own church.

Yet there is no obvious restriction upon anyone's freedom to enter. He has but to walk in, without fee. The only reason why a noble Moslem family remains as keeper of the key is because the tactful British government appreciates the neutralizing effect which this ex-ally of Turkey has had in the past when quarrels have arisen among the Christian sects who enjoy altars and worship-rights within. For in the original proclamation read to the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the Tower of David when General Allenby entered in 1918, the following guarantee was assured:

"To the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Blessed: . . . Since your city is regarded with affection by the adherents of three of the great religions of mankind and its soil has been consecrated by the prayers and pilgrimages of multitudes of devout people of these three religions for many centuries, therefore do I make known to you that every sacred building, monument, holy spot, shrine, traditional site, endowment, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer, of whatsoever forms of the three religions, will be maintained and protected *according to the existing customs* and beliefs of those to whose faiths they are intrusted."

A less generous crusader of earlier centuries might have expelled the Moslem functionaries forthwith. Not so, the Viscount of Megiddo. And so it is, that here, as well as at the little Chapel of the Ascension on the

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Mount of Olives, where a minaret stands between the ruins of a Greek and an Armenian Church whose feuds brought them to this state of ruin, a Moslem rules in authority. In the latter place Christians are allowed to come for prayer only once a year—on Ascension Day.

Certainly, the people of Christendom have reason for gratitude that in by-gone ages Moslem rulers have not seen fit to convert the Church of the Holy Sepulcher into a mosque, as they did with Sancta Sophia in Constantinople, and with the holiest of Hebrew sanctuaries on Mount Moriah.

But in this instance Mohammedans have had the tolerant example of one of their own khalifs to guide them. The Emperor Heraculius had in 629 wrested Jerusalem from the Persians, and in person, attired as a barefoot beggar, restored the relic of the supposed cross to the church then standing. But only eight years later, the Saracen Khalif Omar claimed the city and came in person to receive the keys of the Greek Patriarch. It was noon. The good Moslem wished to pray. But rather than step into the Christian church and thus give his followers excuse for converting it into a mosque, he spread his mat under the heavens in the open court, on the ground now occupied by the little Mosque of Omar from which our muezzin had screamed his early morning call.

WE MEET A KEEPER OF THE KEY

Inside the main portal of the church we found,
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sure enough, a little raised platform covered with rugs of the Orient, on which were squatting representatives of the family who are keepers of the key. Their dignified detachment from all that was going on around them discouraged us from making inquiries we were anxious to put to them. These were not to be confused with "dragomen." Several times we returned in the hope of catching a glimpse of the key itself. But it was useless to try to thaw them out.

At last came a moment when we found on duty a progressive young Moslem of distinctly "modernist" type. His tan shepherd's plaid suit and well-polished brown shoes gave him a jaunty look. And under his red fez, cocked to one side of his head, loomed the horn-rimmed spectacles of a "student mind." In admirable English he volunteered the information that he was delving deeply into archæology and would like nothing better than to come to Harvard to continue his studies.

This emboldened us to ask, "Would your elders, yonder, allow you to show us the key? Perhaps you wouldn't mind bringing it outside the door to let us take a picture of you holding it?"

To our surprise, he assented; procured the key from the recesses of the threshold, and amid the frowned disapproval of the dignitaries on their rugs, this admirable example of Islam's "Youth Movement" who had tossed overboard his scruples about the "evil eye" of the kodak, took his position in the hot sunlight just to the

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left of the open portal of the church, with the result seen at the beginning of this chapter.

THE ROMANCE OF THE CROSS

He was standing, unawares, on the grave of a crusader, one "Dr. Phillip"! The cross and the sword carved on his tombstone stirred us with pictures of what this little court must have been like when Knights Hospitaler and Knights Templar and crusaders from the chief nations of mediæval Europe swarmed here, having reached their goal after a bloody pilgrimage through perils of the sword, sea, disease, hunger, and ignorance. We can only estimate what the reaching of the Holy Sepulcher meant to the best of them when we realize that one pious leader—Louis IX—who had been unable to free it from the infidel, would not even come into the city although he was only a stone's throw away. He had failed to gain the Tomb of Christ and would not allow himself the pleasure of beholding it.

In crusading times a colonnade of arches and pillars gave pilgrims shelter from rain and sun. A single column and one step remain, close by the two narrow alley-ways which make an unimposing approach but one which, like the "needle's eye" in ancient city gates, is narrow enough to be easily barricaded against surging mobs which sometimes develop from the pious processions. But time has left several other goodly relics of the handiwork of crusader-architects who, frankly disappointed at the crudity of the structure they had strug-

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gled to win, set about improving the buildings, for ever since the fourth century shrines on this site have been built, destroyed, patched and restored until the whole mass to-day is a distortion of art, comely only because of the great romance of worship which encrusts it.

The square bell-tower from which we heard the clangling matin stands as a monument of twelfth-century zeal, as well as the Romanesque façade, the smaller of the two domes and the chapel now used as the Greek Cathedral. But there are a few simpler tokens inside the church which make those knights of old live again —men who fared forth with virtue enough in their original intent, but who, through unscrupulous leadership and inability to withstand the baser promptings of adventurers, assumed unholy tactics and taught the Saracens themselves new vices of cruelty and debauch.

I refer to the long sword and the spurs, perhaps rightly assigned to Godfrey de Bouillon; and most of all, to the crude little crosses scratched by crusaders on the stone walls as they descended the twenty-nine steps leading down to the Chapel of Saint Helena. These steps themselves, shadowed with antiquity, are so worn by the footsteps of the centuries as to make the descent perilous. Yet how they speak! The little chapel to which they lead, with one apse dedicated to the thief who repented on the cross and the other to the mother of Constantine, is even more impressive than the superstructure above. Soon after the first Christian emperor learned that “the true place of the Sepulcher”

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had been discovered on a site which Herod had tried to conceal by erecting on it an altar to Venus, he ordered a basilica built there.

If the time ever comes—as it is bound to, perhaps before very long—when the upper portions of the rambling conglomeration of buildings must be destroyed for the safety of the people, we hope that this crypt of Constantine's basilica and the so-called Cave of the Crosses beneath it, where Helena purported to have found her three “proofs” of Calvary, will be incorporated in a shrine as simple, as gleaming, as æsthetic as the new Church of the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor. May it be a building as resourceful as the Church of the Sisters of Zion, who have encased within their pleasing modern structure a portion of a very ancient pavement on which Roman soldiers have scratched their game board, and also half of the Ecce Homo Arch which is certainly far enough below the present level of the street to be the place from which Pilate displayed Christ to the multitude. Our wish springs from no credulousness about the crosses found by the empress, but from a feeling that this crypt brings us nearest to the beginnings of Christian worship on a site which was traditionally assigned to Calvary in the morning of our era and toward which, strangely enough, the weight of modern scholarship inclines.

A DISTORTION OF HISTORY

How confused and offended we found ourselves, by

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the maze of shadowy aisles and altars to which definite details of our Lord's agony are assigned. By what distortion of the imagination have fraudulent ecclesiastics combined to gather under one roof and to parcel out among rival sects not only "the center of the earth" and the "birthplace of Adam," but the legendary grave of this same worthy; as well as the various "stations of the cross" from the "Chapel of the Crowning with Thorns," "The Chapel of the Division of the Vestments," to "The Chapel of the Nailing to the Cross"; and the "Stone of Unction." This latter is held by Latins, who are gracious enough to allow Armenian, Coptic, and Orthodox lamps to burn over it!

One can easily understand how such trifling matters as the sweeping of rubbish and the lighting of tapers have led to quarrels which actually disregarded life itself. Hence the Keeper of the Key, who sits complacently on his rug, despises the gilded and contentious thing he sees enacted before him as Christianity, and thanks Allah that his faith indulges in no such idolatry but adorns itself with arabesqued mosaics and lines of geometric beauty.

We found ourselves least of all impressed by the marble shrine which stands immediately under the central dome and purports to cover the Sepulcher itself. Its walls are already bulging and threatening to tumble down upon credulous peasants who bow themselves backwards out of the Angels' chapel, satisfied that they have prayed before and kissed the actual sarcophagus

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of Jesus, although it is only five feet in length! Not at all does its size jar their ideal of a masterful Christ who all his robust days, went walking through Galilee and Judæa.

Much more interesting for speculation we found the rock-hewn tombs near the wretched little portion of the church which Syrians once tried to build by day and Armenians destroyed by night. These do not prove that, as legend of the past three centuries asserts, Joseph himself and Nicodemus were entombed here, but they do indicate the type of grave common in the first century, and they do furnish very significant argument that this place was *outside the city wall* and therefore may have contained the garden tomb of Christ.

But all these speculations lead us into a realm which Christ has forbidden us to explore. "Neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, . . . but . . . in spirit and truth."

There is only one place within the Church of the Holy Sepulcher where we had any sense of "climbing *up* to Calvary"—which, by the way, is far less likely to have been a "green hill far away" than a rocky little Judæan mound, not nearly so high even as Paul's Areopagus in Athens.

A narrow flight of eighteen steps led us up to the Chapels of Golgotha, a part of which is built over the fissure-cleft rock which ecclesiastics would have us believe is the Hill of the Skull. Under one of the altars the natural stone appears, with one hole purporting to

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have held the cross of Christ and the others, those of the thieves. We knew we were doing what he discouraged when we allowed ourselves to feel that we might be on the true Calvary. Yet here alone in all the rambling building we were possessed by a sense of Calvary. The mystic in us strangled the historian.

Here in shadows so dark that we could scarcely see our hands, we found ourselves strangely bowed, among black-faced Christians from Abyssinia, swarthy Copts from Egypt, and one helmeted American tourist. Somehow, the altars with their gaudy lamps vanished; the mosaics and jeweled cross, the richly decorated altarpiece of Christ on his mother's knee, all disappeared, and on a rocky little mound open to Jerusalem's lowering skies we saw the Son of man uplifted on his Roman cross; and Mary standing there, as he tenderly intrusted her to John. Not in imagery, but in spiritual reality we cried,

“See from his hands, his side, his feet,
Sorrow and blood flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?”

Even hampered by the distasteful “impedimenta” of the church, we could not escape the reality of the fact. Even while condemning the frauds of priests imposed upon peasant minds, we felt ourselves surrounded by a cloud of witnesses attesting the sincerity of these people's prayers in the eyes of an understanding Father.

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After such an experience in the radiant darkness of that upper chapel we could scarcely refrain from calling out to the Keeper of the Key as we crossed the threshold: "This is not Christianity that you see all about you! Christ is not lamps that burn, incense that ascends, jewels that flash! He is not in gloom that men sanctify. He is not here! He is risen! Some day his new interpreters will come to your old East. From them you will learn the real Jesus who walked your Jerusalem streets. And you will find him more than Prophet. For he is the Son of God! He himself shall be a '*door opened*, which none can shut.' "

THE MIRACLE OF HOLY FIRE

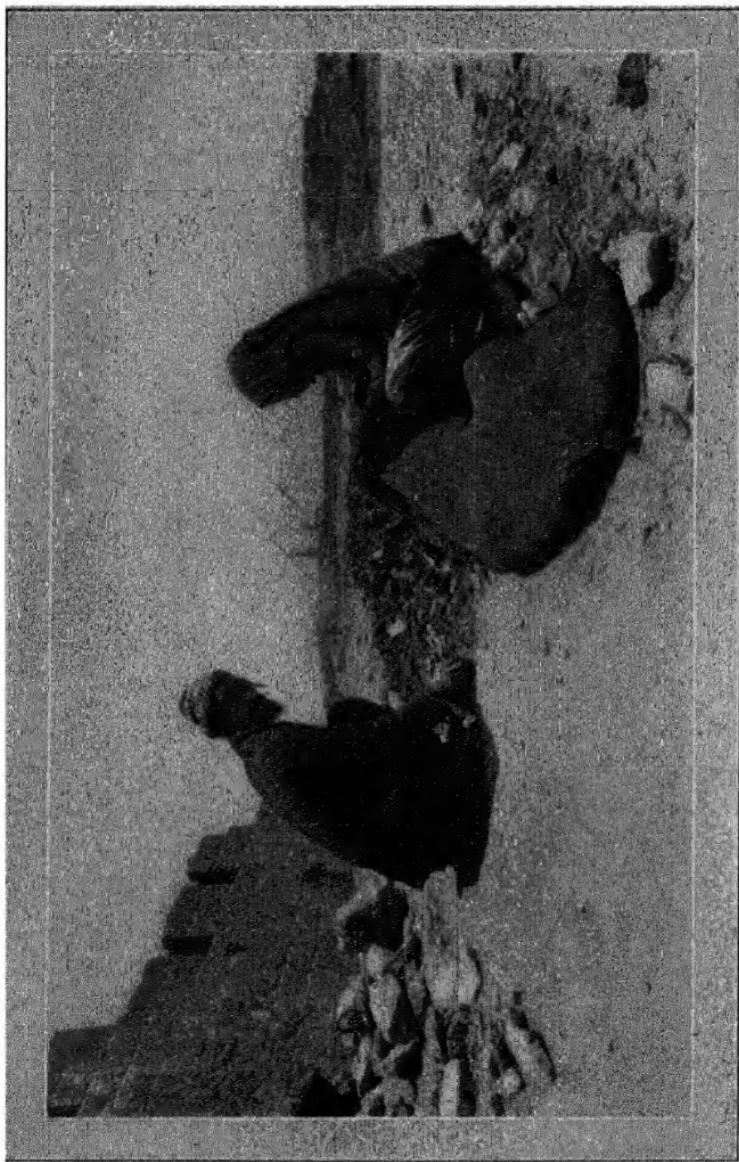
(At Easter, thousands of Oriental Christians assemble in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Jerusalem, to light tapers from the "Holy Fire" passed out to them as a miracle by the Orthodox Patriarch and an Armenian Bishop.)

No carven shrine on holy site can hold
The spirit of the Christ gone forth from it;
While pilgrims come with faith made bold
By walks from Caucasus for benefit
Of kissing marble tomb with falling wall
Mid lamp and bell that superstition pall,
He has gone forth where busy people fare.
What matter if the tomb be here or there,
If Calvary be this small mound or that?
What matter if a Moslem spread his mat
Of prayer near it and hold the massive key
To door of crumbling church, since Christ's own hand
Controis the key which sets souls free
And makes of every land a holy land?

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No priest through chink in man-built shrine
Can pass to pilgrim hands the holy fire.
One only can light up their hearts' desire;
One only can their erring hearts refine:
The Christ who left his tomb for open air,
The Christ they passed *en route*, all unaware
That he was comrade on their road of prayer!





Pious SCAVENGERS OF PAST GLORIES

CHAPTER X

DWELLERS AT THE DUNG GATE

"I went out . . . to the dung gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem."

MANY a simple incident in the daily life of Palestine folks finds an admirable description on Old Testament pages. Natives of Zion seem frequently to be their own "contemporary ancestors."

Every pilgrim in Palestine to-day naturally expects to have his understanding of the Gospels illumined. But there are times when he is actually startled by the kinship between current customs and the ways of life described by chroniclers of old. Praised be their name for the graphic picturesqueness of their narrative!

Such was our experience one golden Sunday morning when we found ourselves in the vicinity of Nehemiah's Dung Gate, outside the east and the south walls of the city where the rich finds of recent archæologists have come to light. Here we chanced upon a pair of pious Jews who were an unconscious dramatization of those lines from the Second Samuel, describing the end of Saul and Jonathan:

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"Thy glory, O Israel, is slain upon thy high places!
How are the mighty fallen!"

And we are daring both to "tell it in Gath" and to "publish it in the streets of Ashkelon." The Philistines are dead. Long live the Philistines!

There is something fundamentally fascinating about all walled towns. The charm of old Chester springs from memories of a Roman wall. The ivory-tinted minster at York looms best from the broad promenade along her city wall. And who that has seen Granada has not dreamed over her old Moorish wall, sunning itself on the steep slopes below the Alhambra and the snowy Sierras? The Turkish walls of The Castle of Europe along the Bosphorus; the seaward walls of Malaga; the eloquent landward walls of Constantine at the Golden Horn—how these stir the imagination with pictures of invading hosts, of gallant defenders, of violent sally and assault! Even we who live in an age when chemical gases make jokes of the childish trust once put in strongholds of stone, find romantic interest in them as tangible incarnations of man's desire to protect his home, his children, his temple, and his trade from the ruthless hand of invaders. There is something extremely fundamental about man's tendency to surround himself with walls. Give a child a handful of blocks. What is his first instinct? To construct some sort of wall—a house-wall, a garage wall, the wall of a garden like his mother's, any sort of wall which his little percepts dictate.

DWELLERS AT THE DUNG GATE

JERUSALEM'S ROMANTIC WALL

For historical, religious, and archæological interest, the wall at Jerusalem cannot be exceeded anywhere in the world to-day. First, because it is still a charming example of a mediæval inclosure which has not yet been concealed and incrusted with modern buildings, although the new Jerusalem springing up outside its northwest angle bids fair to hide portions of it. Still, long stretches of uninterrupted masonry remain, mellowed with the absorbed sunshine of the centuries and displaying a significant dissymmetry of unmatched stones, which have been used and brought down and built up again by a long succession of builders and destroyers. Here, indeed, the very "stones cry out" their venerable story and tell the haste and the usual impecuniousness of their contractors. The north wall is romantic with towers and turrets, square and pleasingly crenelated. The lovely Damascus Gate with its busy entrance outlined by a double arch-line, seems to have caught from passing camel caravans some of their ornamental trappings and set them upon their parapets.

It is only about sixty years since archæologists first began to explore Palestine. Between Helena's fourth-century "site-fixing" pilgrimages and the last half of the nineteenth century no effort had been made to determine the "holy places," except by surface examinations based on topographical features. It is well that science has delayed until now, when it is equipped to examine and tabulate every potsherd and vase-handle

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shedding light on sacred history. The rubbish heaps of Jerusalem are constantly giving forth thrilling evidences of the amazingly primitive civilizations which sent us an Old Testament Scripture amazingly advanced in its ethic. Yet, in spite of the life-work of such scholars as Robinson and Bliss and the three groups of men now excavating in the Holy City, only the beginning has been made, largely due to the difficulty of securing permission from suspicious Moslem and Jewish property holders.

Other important cities of Judah and the Plain have so completely vanished that even their site is unknown. But never in the long reach of history has the site of Jerusalem been lost. For thirty-five hundred years men have rejoiced in its high places. Long before David coveted it for his capital it was a walled stronghold of the Jebusites. And between those early walls and the ones we look upon to-day so many others have been erected that the mere tracing of their outline throws one into a maze of confusion. But at last archæologists have determined rather definitely the extent of David's fortification, the extensions made by Solomon, and the line of Nehemiah's reconstruction.

A WALK AROUND THE WALL WITH NEHEMIAH

He who tarries in Zion to-day is far more free to brood leisurely over the ancient walls than the pious pilgrims and crusading hosts who reached the Holy City of old. A twofold restriction fettered these: the

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whims of Moslem authorities, who displayed only so much as they wished; and the plans of the ecclesiastics who entertained them.

How different it is to-day, when anyone may go unaccompanied and unafeard, as did we, out through any of the eight city gates and make a tour of the eloquent walls, either afoot, or on donkey-back, as did Nehemiah on his epochal night survey!

We chose one golden Sunday morning for this privilege—chiefly because we had vainly tried to find in the city some church service able to hold all the emotions which had been welling up within us since the melodious dawn of that Sabbath in the City of David. On the threshold of the German Church of the Redeemer and of the Hospice of the Russian Palestine Society, and in the shadowy mysteries of various chapels in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher we had restlessly sought something we could not find. Christ, for us, was not there. We found him along the old city wall.

This was our route. From the Mûristân Section, near the traditional Calvary, we followed the so-called "Via Dolorosa" through the impressive shadows of that steep and narrow way, under the exposed half-span of the Ecce Homo Arch (the other excavated half being now built into the church of the Sisters of Zion), then, straight on through the Mohammedan Quarter and out Saint Stephen's Gate. Plenty of loose stones were there, immortalizing the hard martyrdom

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of him whose face had shone as that of an angel. Its alternative name, "Gate of the Last," suggests that here the two sections in charge of two builders met.

We were greatly amused when a Moslem lady, who passed us, attired in a good quality of the conventional cape and full skirt of solid black, lifted her veil boldly and gave us a frank stare and a wink. There was something a bit familiar about her painted lips and penciled brows and we set her down mentally as an Eastern echo of her flirtatious American sisters. What was our surprise, later, to learn that she was one of our young shipmates, a Hebrew fellow townsman, who, disguised in Moslem garb, was on her way home from attending a mosque service!

Once outside the Gate, we began to follow the unbroken expanse of the east wall. Through a Moslem cemetery which claims the brow of this elevation above the Kedron we picked our way, stopping for a friendly pantomime conversation with three darkly attired Mohammedan women taking their recreation, wandering around among the fez-crowned stones of the men and the dilapidated plain ones marking the humility of woman, even in death. For a moment they suggested to us "The Three Marys," but we were very sure that the Marys did not allow their vision of the golden Easter dawn to be filtered through any dusty black veils such as cumbered these women.

We wondered whether they accepted the popular tradition that at the Judgment Day a wire will be

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stretched from this eastern wall across to the Mount of Olives opposite; that Mohammed himself will sit here; that all souls who successfully walk across will be saved; and those who fall into the deep valley will remain in Gehenna. The sons of the Prophet have shown cunning in selecting so strategic a place for their cemetery, from which they will be ready to rise promptly and make their entry to the carnal pleasures of the Moslem paradise. Wise are they who retain on their crown a lock of hair, by which a friendly angel may assist them over the wire.

THE OLD EAST WALL

Endless controversies have raged about the lines of the north and the south walls of Jerusalem, but, standing here at the long east wall we had a sense of certainty that its course has not changed much within the history of man. The sharp decline of the rocky eastern hill falling away to the Kedron Valley and the presence of the Temple Area immediately behind it determine this. Nature and history here have both been in the hand of God.

We had a very real feeling that Christ himself had walked in this vicinity: "As he went forth out of the temple, one of his disciples said unto him, Teacher, behold, what manner of stones and what manner of buildings! And Jesus said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left here one stone upon another."

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This sense of sure location too is confirmed by the looming of the Mount of Olives opposite, massy yet somehow ethereal in glowing morning light. The most scrutinizing of modern scholars has never doubted this to be Olivet, passed by Jesus when "he drew nigh to Jerusalem from Bethany and Bethphage"; Olivet, which many and many a time ministered to him; and which at last gave courage for Gethsemane. Looking across to it from just outside the Temple Area, we had such a sense of those dramatic words of Matthew, "And they went every man unto his own house: but Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them."

Here was the sheer beauty of Olivet, answering the sanctity of Moriah across the deep-cut valley of the Brook. We were thronged with impressions too great for mind to register. The Temple pressed its memories upon us from behind; before, the Mount of Olives spread a panorama, a more moving one than which the world has none to offer.

ACROSS THE BROOK

Beyond the Kedron are those fantastic Herodian tombs standing out from the rocky mass of the lower reaches; and others which may have suggested Christ's comparison of Pharisees to "whited sepulchers, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones." "Absalom's Pillar" is identified by

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its grotesque "scent-bottle" cupola; and the pillared "Tomb of Saint James" and the so-called "Pyramid of Zacharias," the door of which has not yet been found by man. Beyond these the road to Bethany and Jericho begins its ascent of Olivet between walls protecting the Jewish cemetery and the garden properties of various sects. The olive groves marking the several Gethsemaines give enough green airiness to the mountain mass to make one understand even to-day, why this little bit of verdure in the midst of Jerusalem's ivory masonry appealed to Christ as a substitute for Galilee. The stately new church of the Franciscans, with many little domes upon its roof and a portal of arches, guards there the "Olive Tree of the Master," now sending up a new shoot which my Fellow Pilgrim calls "The Youth Movement." Later in the afternoon we were to be allowed the exceptional privilege of coming as a group of Protestants to offer prayer here after a vesper service which he would conduct in the Armenian Garden of Gethsemane; and a gentle Franciscan friar would pluck for us a passion flower and a sprig of "rosemary—that's for remembrance." Only in these well-groomed, precise little priestly gardens do the words of the unknown laureate of paradise become applicable to the actual Jerusalem:

"Thy gardens and thy goodly walks
Continually are green,
Where grow such sweet and pleasant flowers
As nowhere else are seen.

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“O happy harbor of God’s saints!
O sweet and pleasant soil.
In thee no sorrow may be found;
No grief, no care, no toil.”

Beyond the Franciscan Garden, perched higher on the Mount, loom the round gilded domes of the Russian Church of Mary Magdalene, flashing like an imperial crown of the Czars. This jeweled extravagance of a vanished dynasty stands among somber cypresses, pointing to the summit of Olivet, twenty-six hundred feet above the Mediterranean. Here against blue Judæan sky are the silhouetted outlines of the little Chapel of the Ascension with its neighboring minaret and the impressive Russian Tower, a landmark visible from the Dead Sea and the hills of Transjordania. Because the ridge of Olivet is parallel to and higher than the Temple Hill, it suggests a vantage-point which may have inspired the “Sons of Korah” to cry:

“How amiable are thy tabernacles,
O Jehovah of hosts!
My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of
Jehovah.”

And when these same poetic patriots exclaimed,
“His foundation is in the holy mountains.
Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion
More than all the dwellings of Jacob,”

they were just expressing the sentiment we felt that Sunday morning as we walked along the walls of

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"Jerusalem the golden,
With milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation
Sink heart and mind oppressed.

"They stand, those halls of Zion,
All jubilant with song,
And bright with many an angel,
And all the martyr throng;

"The Prince is ever in them,
The daylight is serene."

In a panorama as imposing Jerusalem viewed from Olivet the eye demands some single building of imposing character. Such a central, dominating structure has not been wanting. Solomon looked down upon the Temple of his dreams; Christ beheld the more extensive one of Herod; and folks of to-day look upon the crescent-crowned Dome of the Rock, speaking the unity, the beauty, and the down-reaching of the God of all Faiths, over the heads of worshiping people.

But on to the stately fifth-century Byzantine arches of the Golden Gate we pressed, trying to imagine the Palm Sunday processions of crusading days which thronged through the double portals because they had a sense that Christ himself had entered the city in triumph at that point. The solid masonry of the Moslem masters closed the gates in 1530 to await the coming of the Judgment. Yet Christ has entered *through the barricaded door*. For the providential arrival of an equitable mandatory power and the upward pull of

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certain Zionist proposals have beaten their protest against the gates of prejudice.

“Unfold, ye portals everlasting
That the King of Glory may come in!”

“THE CITY OF DAVID”

Wholly ignoring the dangers of the mid-morning sun, we picked our way over loose stones near the site of the Palestine Exploration Fund activities, to the “turn of the Wall” at the southeast corner, where the immense size of the courses of stone enlisted our admiration of the cunning of ancient builders in hewing, transporting, and setting in place such giants. The largest of these stones was displayed during the Middle Ages as “the stone which the builders rejected” and which “is become the head of the corner.”

From this southeast angle of the present wall—one cannot say *modern* wall, for so much of it as it now stands is hoary with history—on to the place where we re-entered the city by the “Dung Gate,” or “Bab-el-Mugharibeh” (Gate of the Moors), which lies well to the north of Nehemiah’s Dung Gate, we were walking on one of the most disputed and most valuable sites which modern exploration has shed light upon. The rubbish heaps over which we picked our way to the accompaniment of hideous howlings of immense scavenger dogs held at bay by a frail rope and the commands in Arabic of an unkempt dweller at the Dung Gate, were on the edge of mysterious “Millo” and the ancient City of David. It was here that the son of

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Jesse threw his men against the Jebusite possessors. This was "the stronghold of Zion." "And David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward." (See map at rear.)

When Solomon extended David's City and built on the western hill, the southern line of his wall ran well to the south of the present one. But on the west it may have coincided with the modern line, as far as the so-called Jaffa Gate, which would represent the ancient Corner Gate of Solomon. The north wall of Solomon's city is not yet definitely determined, except from the conclusion that a deep-cut tributary of the Tyropeon Valley gave it a natural line east from the Corner Gate to its meeting with the Temple Area.

But even Solomon's Wall is not more interesting than Nehemiah's, because the builder himself has left us an invaluable first-hand description of his work of reconstruction. The little record of Nehemiah, indeed, is the only source-book in existence, giving a contemporary description of work on the Jerusalem wall at a definite period of history. And it is tremendously satisfying that scholars have identified enough landmarks at last to give us a pretty clear idea of the extent of the walls as Nehemiah left them and as they were when looked upon by Christ.

NEHEMIAH'S WALK

It was always a reproach to an ancient city to have
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breaches in her wall. And Nehemiah, deeply sensitive to the shame of the fair city of his fathers, "arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God put into my heart to do for Jerusalem"—a wonderful civic ambition to actuate any city dweller in any age!

Nehemiah tells us that he went out the Valley Gate to the Dung Gate and viewed "the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire." He mentions passing also the Fountain Gate and the king's pool, where the débris made it impossible even for his beast to pick his way. On foot he went a distance along by the Brook and viewed the wall from that low vantage point; then returned as he had come. The three gates mentioned in his account have all been located, as well as the Tower of Furnaces mentioned in the description of the triumphant march around the restored wall. "The stairs of the City of David, at the ascent of the wall, above the house of David," have also been identified with the rock-cut steps at the southeast corner of the ridge.

THE MYSTERY OF "MILLO"

The most perplexing mystery that remains is the northwest line of Nehemiah's wall. If this could be definitely determined, it would shed much light on the location of Golgotha, Joseph's Tomb, and the Garden of the Resurrection. Unless this wall extended south from the present Damascus Gate, well to the east of the

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modern city boundary, there is no possibility that the site venerated by generations of pilgrims from every land in Christendom as the "Holy Sepulcher" is authentic. If it did follow this course, the site may be genuine.

The very stones over which we stumbled would of themselves have told us nothing of their freighted past. It is only as man's exploring mind reads meaning into these mute evidences that their story is forced to light. Then only do they "cry out," as Christ prophesied; then only do they tell us, for example, that the tremendously significant "fortress tower" excavated at the north wall of the ancient Jebusite city, a hastily constructed, strange piece of masonry of large and small stones, may be a work of Solomon, built over a breach in the wall made when his father, David, conquered the city from the Jebusites; that it may, in fact, be mysterious "Millo" itself.

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While walking between this important site and the modern Dung Gate in the south wall we chanced upon a Jew and his wife, bent over the heaps of rubbish that must long have characterized this section. Of such a place, cluttered in his day by the débris of war, Nehemiah had exclaimed, "There is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall." That these were a pious pair, orthodox in the faith of their fathers, we concluded from the fact that the man wore two long

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curls over his temples. The woman was attired in the meanest of rags, with, however, the vestige of a colorful scarf of striped silk protecting her head from the noon sun, which beat upon her as she leaned over the piles of rubbish. "They that were brought up in scarlet embrace dung-hills"! A perfect exposition of this old scripture was dramatized before us, with the impersonators all unaware of their rôles!

Theirs is the same tragedy that lurks in the dark faces of the scattered sons of the Moors who still haunt the hills of southeast Spain once possessed by their fathers.

Is it we Christians who have forced the legitimate sons and daughters of Jerusalem to be scavengers where once their people were princely possessors of the land? Is it "history," "the hand of God," or "Arabic prejudice" that has cut them off from so much of their inheritance? (There are six Arabs to every Jew in Palestine.) Has Zionism come to fulfill Daniel's enigmatic words and make "an end of breaking in pieces the power of thy holy people"?

Answer these riddles as you will. The fact that disturbed us, thrilled as we still were with the glories we had just seen all about us, was the blindness of these scavengers to the hill so "beautiful for situation." The stern necessity of immediate livelihood was probably dominant in their minds. But since they seemed orthodox sons of Abraham, we gave them credit for seeing in the historic dust, some of the glories that were ac-

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complished not far from where they sat, when Nehemiah's wall was ready for dedication because the "people had a mind to work"; because "they that bare burdens" laded themselves; and because goldsmiths and merchants co-operated with rulers of districts to restore the breaches near their own homes. Even pious dwellers at the Dung Gate could scarcely imagine the royal festival which took place when Nehemiah himself "brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall" and appointed two great companies, one led by Ezra and one by himself, that gave thanks and went in procession, one group retracing the course of the builder's famous night ride, the other group proceeding in the opposite direction, above the Tower of the Furnaces and along to "the broad wall," reaching probably as far as the modern Jaffa Gate.

From where our grovelers in the rubbish heaps of time were sitting the ancient builders, rulers, and people could have been heard on that festal day giving thanks. "And the singers sang loud, with Jezrahiah their overseer. . . . And the women also and the children rejoiced; so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off."

How the very hill where they squatted must have resounded at such an hour! The valleys of Kedron and of Hinnom rejoiced; the plains and fields and villages round about Jerusalem joined in singing to the distant accompaniment of cymbals, psaltery, and harps upon the holy hill. For security had returned. Porters and

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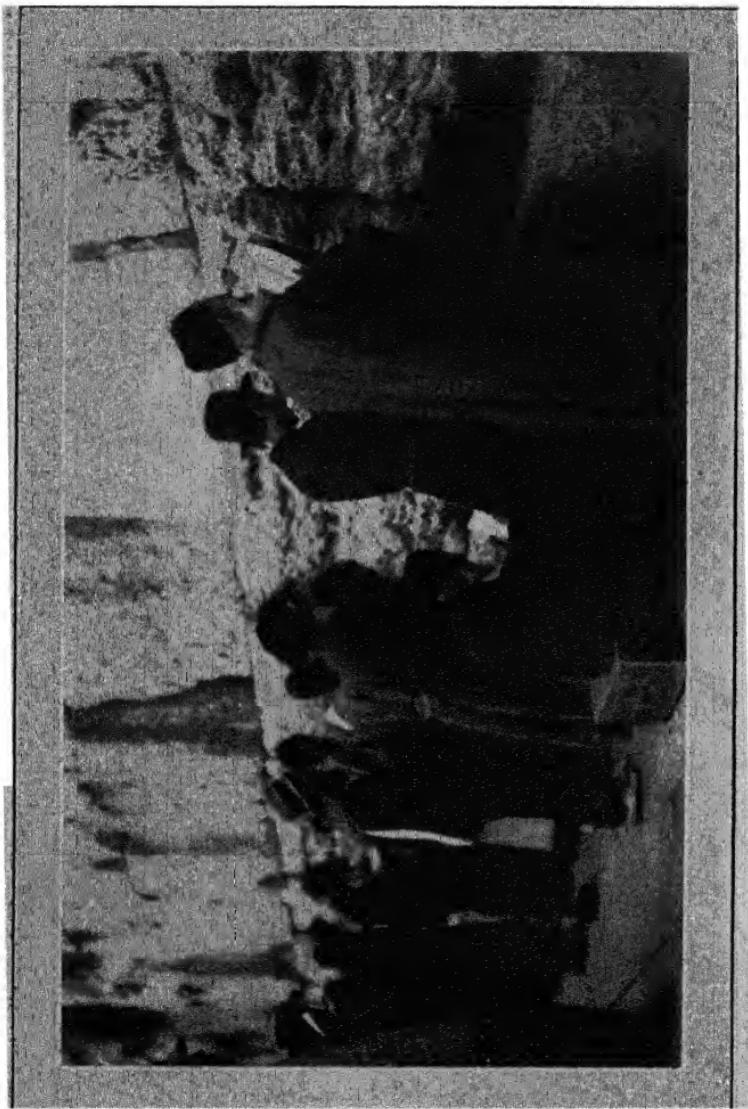
guards were appointed. But the new gates were not to be opened “until the sun was hot.” For “the city was wide and large; but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded.”

And over the sites where the new homes of Nehemiah’s day were erected we returned through the Dung Gate, into the city so set on its hill of history, that it can never be hid from our memories, even when we are far from its hoary walls.

“Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode;
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation’s walls surrounded,
Thou mayest smile at all thy foes.”

And that “salvation’s wall” which surrounds old Jerusalem to-day is the increasing sense of brotherhood, which, in spite of occasional street quarrels between Arab and Jew, between Moslem and Christian, is nearer than ever before to the fulfillment of God’s promise to Haggai: “In this place will I give peace.” For Jerusalem is Uru-Salim—“the abode of peace.”

DELECTABLE SORROW AT SOLOMON'S WALL



CHAPTER XI

WAILERS AT THE WALL

"A voice of wailing is heard out of Zion."

TURNING abruptly in his seat one morning as he was driving us across the Plain of Esdraelon, Elias asked with Arab directness, "*In America, do you love Jews?*"

We were saved the embarrassment of giving our instinctive reply, for Elias himself garrulously continued his line of thought.

"Here we are now," he said, "running across the finest land in all Palestine. Jews own it—they bought it from a man in Beirut. They have bought along the Bay of Acre too. You remember I pointed out to you from the top of Mount Carmel their fields and new settlement right on the rich sea plain near Haifa? Just as great a contest is going on there to-day between Arab and Jew as between Elijah and the priests of Baal. I always like that story because I'm named for the prophet. The Zionist Jews have sixty new colonies. Balfouria is thriving. And wait until you go through Tel Aviv on your way to ship at Joppa! You'll think you are in a cheap American town—a 'boom city,' they call it. There is nothing native about it—Western

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apartment houses, with outside iron staircases; cement factories, furniture factories, shoe and candy factories, electric shops, motion pictures—you can imagine what it is like, coming in five years from nothing to forty thousand souls. They speak of it as 'The Miracle City of the East.' Of course it is prosperous while American money is boosting building. But will it remain so? They boast that there is nothing old in Tel Aviv, but, ah me! We Palestinians love our old cities, our old flat-topped houses, our old roads and fields and hills. Alas, this country is no longer good for the Arab. *Christ was born here. But he lives in America now!*"

"Christ was born here. But he lives in America now!" How these words pierced us! Would that they were literally true!

But rather than disillusion Elias about our own land, we drew him on about the racial clash in Palestine. Being a true Arab, he was only too glad to talk; and his general attitudes were typical of those held by many of his race.

"We do not hate the old Jews who have long lived among us and speak the Arabic language. It is the new immigrants from Russia and Poland, who call themselves 'pioneers,' these are the ones that are bringing in ideas we don't like. They are going to push the Arabs out entirely, not by fire and force, as the Nationalists drove non-Turks from Asia Minor, but by buying us out before we know it. They say we have other Arab countries to go to while they have no Jewish

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homeland. Well, once Jews came in under Joshua. They couldn't hold the land. They treated the inhabitants with greatest cruelty. They were put out by the Romans two thousand years ago. But we have held the country steadily for thirteen hundred years. God doesn't want the Jews all in Palestine. They couldn't get in. He wants them scattered. Moslem Arab and Christian Arab, like me, all feel the same. What do they mean, bringing in so many people when already we have too little work and food for ourselves? What is to become of us?"

"But, Elias," we protested, "you Arabs still outnumber the Jews seven to one, don't you? The Jews are only ten per cent of the whole population."

"Yes, but the Jews of Palestine have increased two hundred per cent in the last seven years. Yet," he chuckled, "our Arab population increases rapidly, too, and to-day we are seven hundred thousand Arabs to one hundred and ten thousand Jews."

"Your prosperity would be increased if you allowed capital and modern means of agricultural development to come in. The social program of the Zionists will lift your life along with the Jewish. Is it not true that all the improvements set up by Nathan Straus have been given with the proviso that they be open to Arab as well as Jew? If you should be bitten by a mad dog prowling outside the city wall, you would be given immediate treatment at the new Pasteur Institute, wouldn't you? And surely you must admit that the

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instruction being given your Arab mothers at the welfare stations of the Hadassah women is desirable."

"Arab mothers know well enough how to care for their children without Jews setting up milk stations and bossing things in our Arab quarter. And then, all this foolish talk about pumping Jordan water to Jerusalem! We Arabs laugh. Why, the Jordan Valley lies more than three thousand feet below the city. Think how far they would have to lift the water. I say, the British know better. They are bringing water into the ancient pools of Solomon from Uertas Springs, in Ain Farah Gorge in the wilderness hills of Judah. Some people say Solomon's garden was near here and that David watered his sheep at this spring, as shepherds from this section still do. This is the country of the twenty-third psalm."

"But, Elias," we continued, "you surely can't complain if the Zionist colonists reclaim land now lying waste."

"Oh, I know how they talk about making the desert 'bloom and blossom as the rose.' But, friends, the parts of Galilee they are cultivating have always 'bloomed and blossomed as the rose.'"

"Shame on you, Elias. Why don't you Arabs co-operate with the Jews and all prosper together? They have paid you well for your land. None of you have had to leave Palestine because of the new immigrants. If you continue your lament, we'll have to get you a little corner of the Wailing Wall all for yourself."

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"Well, that's one place I *will* not take you when we go up to Jerusalem," he retorted, indignantly. "I wouldn't take even Sheik Ibn Jelouee there. I'm a Christian Arab and I will not go to the Wall."

"JERUSALEM REMEMBERS THINGS THAT WERE OF OLD"

And so it was, that we had the pleasure of making our way alone to the Jews' Wailing Wall, about four o'clock one Friday afternoon.

As we sauntered through the narrow streets of the Hebrew Quarter we commented on their advantages. The facility with which they may be barricaded in times of disorder; the maximum of shade guaranteed from the tall house-walls bordering them; the protection formerly guaranteed to a larger population within the city walls—all these considerations counterbalanced the discomfort of crowded jostlings of people and the constant necessity of evading donkeys and camel-trains proceeding through the ubiquitous throngs of humanity.

In spite of Elias's prejudiced remarks, we promptly recognized the greater cleanliness of the Jewish Quarter, in contrast to the cluttered squalor of the adjoining Moslem section. Houses had their entrance ways whitewashed. Very clean Hebrew women of the old orthodox type, in cotton dresses and spotless aprons, with black shawls or striped silk kerchiefs over their heads, were making their way sadly to the Wailing

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Wall. Here they stood in that narrow canyon shut in by buildings and by the south wall inclosing the Haram-esh-Sherîf, or the Old Temple Area on the summit of Mount Moriah. Just on the other side of the Wailing Wall (Kauthal Ma 'Arbê) is the Mosque of El Aksa, with the "August Sanctuary" of the Dome of the Rock a short distance beyond.

When we reached the Wall many women were already standing facing their portion of the fifty-two yard remnant of the celebrated Temple Masonry. One venerable mother in Israel revealed under her white wool shawl a back humped with years of drudgery. She carried a little stool, for Moslem authorities have removed the benches which were once there. Their reason for this was the alleged acquisitiveness of the Jews, who in time might erect a shelter over the benches, convert it into a synagogue and ultimately encroach upon the Haram-esh-Sherîf.

Many of the limestone blocks are fifteen feet long and one of them, thirteen feet high. A few tufts of wild grass have sucked enough nourishment from the dusty crevices to hold on to life, even as the Jews have managed to do through centuries of preponderant Moslem control. Where the cracks between the courses of stone are wider we saw pieces of paper stuffed, containing prayers written out and hopefully left there, even as Nehemiah is said to have inserted the names of those who returned from captivity. Sometimes people who wish favors write the name and address of the

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individual involved and the things desired, and place it in the Wailing Wall, confident of results. On a few of the stones inscriptions are cut in Hebrew.

CHIEF MOURNERS

Beyond the women's section of the wall the men stand with open books and woeful countenance. Even Western women are not permitted to encroach upon this portion, but must view from afar the impressive old "chief Jews," attired in long robes of blue silk or of rich velvet—brown or black—edged with fur to match their fur-trimmed turbans set atop venerable beards and forelocks. Slender hands reach out from voluminous sleeves to clasp their ritual of lament. Nowhere in all the world are such sorrowful faces. From their deep-set, woeful eyes all the stored-up tragedy of their race looks out disappointed, disillusioned, and despised through generations of separation from their heritage of the site bought by David for an ancient center of worship and of culture.

The poor Jewish farmer, in homespun smock, broad felt hat, and enormous shoes of animal-hide, stands there alongside the richly robed "patriarchs." Emaciated young Russian students in long black coats, iron-rimmed spectacles and too-large black hats are there too—the original of the "genus grind" met in certain colleges. Young Jewish boys in training for synagogue service come here too, with sweetly innocent, spiritual faces almost "virginal" in purity.

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The professional wailers or paid "proxies" were not so numerous that particular Friday afternoon, so we really felt quite impressed by the medley of loud laments of those who had for so long been nursing their grief "to keep it warm." This is the substance of their laments:

Reader: Because of the palace which is deserted,
People: We sit alone and weep.

Reader: Because of the Temple which is destroyed,
Because of the walls which are broken down,
Because of our greatness which is departed,

People: We sit alone and weep.

Reader: Let peace and joy return to Jerusalem.
People: Let the branch of Jerusalem put forth and bud.

We were annoyed at the cynical attitude of a young American rabbi who stood near us, watching the ceremony. He displayed no sympathy, no appreciation of its historic background. He was "ashamed of the old folks." It was as if he were deaf to the voice of their laments:

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?
Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."

A ZIONIST RABBI AIRS HIS CONVICTIONS

Walking back with us to our hotel, he disclosed the

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fact that he was head rabbi of a progressive New England congregation enthusiastically in favor of the Zionist program.

"All Jerusalem should be razed," he declared. "Then only will sanitary and wholesome social conditions be established. It really is a pity that the War did not accomplish this, for the sects in charge of 'holy sites' will never consent to it now. If you Christians would cease trying to localize traditions and would help us establish more health stations, it would be greatly to your credit. These Jews we have just watched at the Wailing Wall have very little idea of what we are trying to do, although Palestinian Judaism has approved our aims. The 'branch of Jerusalem has already put forth' buds and they are too blind to see."

"It seems to me," replied my Fellow Pilgrim, "that you are just as one-sided as they. You think only of the future; they, only of their past."

"That may well be. I am sick of their retrospection. Instead of wailing, 'How we are ruined! We are greatly confounded,' it would be better if they tore themselves away from the Wall inclosing what the Moslems do not wish them to share, and helped us get our great university completed up in our ten-acre tract on Mount Scopus; or put their hand to the plowshare with those new pioneers who, it seems to me, are as great souls as the Pilgrim Fathers of New England."

We questioned his last opinion and argued that the ultimate success of the Zionist program will depend not

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so much upon the amount of money which wealthy American Jews are willing to pour into the land-purchasing scheme, as upon the quality of the immigrants who go there; upon their ability to persist, and the adjustment they can make between their new industrialism and the native peasant crafts which have been the congenial tasks of the Palestinian for thousands of years. Certainly, the tobacco factories boasted of by enthusiastic propagandists and the homely concrete factories and Western cabarets and the heralded absence of 'all traces of former generations' are not in the line of Judaism's greatest Gift to the world.

"Would you be willing to take up residence here yourself?" we inquired.

"Oh, no, I am too accustomed to American comforts ever to be happy here. But it is fine for the underprivileged Jews of Russia and oppressed people who find better things here than they have known elsewhere."

"But so much of your Zionist program is merely 'projected,'" we continued. "The 'Rutenberg Electric Project,' the *projected* widening of the River Kishon, the *projected* university. The whole movement, viewed from the sociologist's point of view, is an unnatural one. Never in history have great numbers of people flowed to a new center unless there was some great natural resource to attract them."

"Even on the basis of your own argument," rejoined the rabbi, "Palestine may become a strategic point. If

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air activity continues to develop over the deserts of Arabia, this little bridge of land between Egypt and Europe will be a pivotal point coveted by all nations."

"But do you not feel that Zionism is being artificially stimulated by sentimental appeals?"

"If you mean that we feel it to be in the line of prophecy's fulfillment, you are wrong. Relatively few of the million and a half Jews in New York, for example, will return. But more and more of us are coming to find our true religion in the service of humanity. The old Judaism cannot hold the youth of our race. Zionism is furnishing a new idealism and will give Jewry everywhere a revitalizing center of culture."

Comforting ourselves that we were not responsible for the rise or fall of Zionism, we began to look forward to the morrow, when we would discover what lay on the other side of the Wailing Wall and learn from what beauties the sons of Abraham are excluded, whether by Moslem edict or by their own fear lest by entering, they tread upon the as yet unidentified site of the Holy of holies.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL

There is no imposing æsthetic approach to the Al-Haram esh-Sherîf ("The August Sanctuary"), as there is to the Blue Mosque of Constantinople or to the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, mirrored in its shadowy lagoon. Through a squalid and malodorous

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tunnel, reeking with damp dust-germs from unsprinkled sweepings and animal refuse we made our way. A swarthy, bare-legged Moslem youth, carrying a dripping black goat-skin water bag (see title page) over his shoulder, pointed us to the main entrance. And the sole custodian of the "August Sanctuary" was not a priestly attendant, but an untidy black-faced caretaker, sweeping the huge flagstones and ominously threatening us if we did not buy for fifteen "piasters" entrance tickets in the form of descriptive booklets issued by the Supreme Moslem Council. However, we were thankful for the liberalizing tendencies of Islam, which now allow Christians to enter the inclosure each morning except Friday (the Moslem Sunday), provided they leave before the noon prayer hour.

But once inside the prehistoric area, precious to Jews as the site of Solomon's Temple, to Christians for its associations with Christ, and to Mohammedans as the place from which the Prophet "ascended," the charm of the place fills up that which is lacking in its approach. The very first looming of the darkly colorful Dome of the Rock, so perfectly proportioned, set so satisfactorily between its sentinel cypress trees, awakens a response not even stirred by Sancta Sophia or by the Holy Sepulcher. The buildings of Herod's Temple on this site were more extensive and those of Solomon were extravagantly incrusted with gold, but the perfect completeness of this simple octagon, surrounded by its crescent-topped dome of happy proportions, gives one a

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sense of unity, of symmetry, and of the monotheistic ideal. Moslems admit the Dome of the Rock to excel even the most sacred mosque at Mecca in beauty.

A spacious platform lifts the Dome twelve feet above the rest of the inclosure and at each of its four entrances is a cluster of arches which frame charming vistas of the mosque itself. These arches, standing out so abruptly against intense blue sky, unattached to any building, lead out into the reaches of infinity, the infinity of space and of history, stretching back to pre-Davidic days when the inclosure was a threshing-floor for the Jebusites. Moslems call these arches "Mawazin," or "scales," because tradition says that at the Judgment Day balances of good and of evil will be hung here. For whatever else may be lacking in the code of Islam, justice has a prime place. Moslems have shown themselves notably fair in their dealings unless unduly provoked. This trait is immortalized in the famous Moorish Gate of Judgment at the Alhambra in Spain. It is emphasized too in the little building which stands a few feet away from the Dome of the Rock, looking like a miniature of it, but with walls unencased. This "Mahkamat David" (Tribunal of David), or "Ibbat al-Silsileh" (Dome of the Chain), takes its name from the chain which hangs from the ceiling. According to legend, Solomon had a Judgment Place here to which prisoners were brought. Every witness was forced to grasp a dangling chain, and if his testimony were false, a link fell off.

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The Arabic colorfulness of the exterior of the Dome of the Rock is due to the marble facings of its lower courses and to the glazed tiles above, which represent the best ceramic art of the period of Suleiman the Magnificent, the ambitious sixteenth-century builder. We were interested in noting repairs being made to the tiles, which indicated not only the desire of all Islam to keep this shrine in better repair than the Christians do their Church of the Holy Sepulcher; but which are possible because of the recent discovery in the inclosure of the original kilns in which the tiles were made. Potters have been brought here by the splendid Pro-Jerusalem Society to make them in the old manner for mending the broken portions of the walls.

WHERE ISLAMIC ART IS AT ITS BEST

Putting flannel "booties" over our dusty shoes, we stepped into the sanctuary where Moslem, Christian, and Jew all *should* mingle in "the beauty of holiness." The outward promise of beauty was more than enriched by the dark glow of thirty-six windows throwing a sixteenth-century light through the intricate tracery of their conventional design onto mellow Persian rugs covering the floor, and onto the white, red, and green columns of marble monoliths. Graceful arches, ornate with mosaics, spring from an inner row of pillars to support a frieze of blue tiles, telling in gold Cufic letters the name and date of the builder. For the present mosque is due to the skill of Sultan Abdul-

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Malek, who in the seventh century erected a Dome of the Rock which stood until it was destroyed by earthquake in 1016. The building upon which we looked had been erected before the crusaders entered Jerusalem in 1099 and was erroneously believed by them to be the actual Temple of Solomon, a supposition which led them to erect an altar on the sacred rock and to found there the Knights Templar.

THE ALTAR OF DAVID

The huge uncut boulder which occupies most of the interior of the mosque is indeed the "Rock of Ages." In no other place have we ever felt ourselves in touch with such antiquity. There is little doubt that this rock determined the location of the Temple of Solomon, for it was early regarded as the threshing-floor which David bought from the Jebusite, Araunah (Ornan), when the King wished to appease his God—angered because he had tried to take a census of Israel and Judah. "And God came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto Jehovah in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. . . . So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. And David built there an altar unto Jehovah, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings."

In the Orient to-day just such great rocks as this are used as threshing-floors on the edge of villages. And the location of this rock, outside the northern boundary of what is known as "David's City," confirms

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the evidence in favor of its authenticity. When one realizes that the Parthenon at Athens has been standing since the fourth century before Christ, without the protection which this rock has had through the centuries from sanctuaries erected over it, it is not taxing one's credence overmuch to accept this as the very keystone upon which the continuity of religious history hangs. But even without this additional association the rock under the golden dome thrills one with its hoary solemnity.

We tarried dreamily under its lower surface where a grotto is shown, known as the prayer-place of Abraham, of King David, of Elijah, of Solomon, and of Mohammed. From here we looked up at the hole through which the blood of sacrifice is thought to have flowed down. But our spirits beheld, not the countless animals offered there, but the Lamb of God who made "by his oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

For Christ himself had worshiped near this rock. As an infant he had been presented by his parents when they came with "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons" and gave into the arms of aged Simeon the Child who was to be

"A light for revelation to the Gentiles,
And a glory of thy people Israel."

Here the lost boy Jesus had been found "in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them,

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and asking them questions." Hither, as a dusty traveler from Nazareth hills, he had come with Passover pilgrims. Here had stood those pinnacles or wings of the Temple which gave shape to his temptation to "cast himself down." Those walls on Mount Moriah, "beautiful for situation," had gleamed their welcome to him many a time when he was winding around the Mount of Olives from Bethany into the Holy City. Perhaps they had flashed God's eternal strength to him from his very cross on little Calvary.

Almost until the hour of noon prayer we tarried about the various buildings within the "Glorious Sanctuary," noting in the Mosque El Aksa, thought by many to be on the site of Solomon's palace, that the "keblah," or prayer-niche toward Mecca, is aslant the main axis of the building, which was once a Christian basilica. A perfect demonstration, this, that *Islam is aslant the line of Christ*. It is Christianity askew; a faith built on a line not true to plumb. We wanted to watch longer the Moslem boys and girls merrily splashing and jesting at the ancient fountain of El Kâs (The Cup), beneath which are reservoirs designed to take water from Solomon's Pools. Other "sebils," or fountains, and "mastabas" with their "mihrabs" (prayer-places) attracted us; particularly the imposing open-air "mimbar," or pulpit, to which the priest mounts by steep steps each Friday night of the Feast of Ramadan.

But the swarthy custodian pointed to the muezzin already mounting a minaret to call the population to

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prayer, and we made an immediate departure, feeling sorry that Jerusalem Moslems are less generous than those of Constantinople, who had allowed us to observe Friday noon prayer from the balcony of their most conservative mosque; and feeling even more sorry for the old Hebrews at the Wailing Wall, who were shut out from the riches of their own Temple Area.

David, once describing a citizen of Zion, sang:

"Jehovah, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle?
Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?
He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness,
And speaketh truth in his heart."

And as we considered the all-inclusiveness of his idea, we find ourselves repeating on behalf not only of the Jews, but of all who are shut out from the glories of a revealed God:

"Oh, send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me:
Let them bring me unto thy holy hill,
And to thy tabernacles.
Then will I go unto the altar of God,
Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him,
Who is the help of my countenance, and my God."

CHAPTER XII

MOTHERS OF JUDAH

"She shall be *a mother of nations.*"

AT a little postern gate through which a steep footpath runs from the southeast wall of Jerusalem to the village of Silwân (Siloam), we met her in the mid-morning sun.

There were no other pedestrians in sight and we hailed her for an exchange of greetings, although her countenance revealed no geniality from eyes squinted almost shut with the glare. Her mouth was half open to facilitate breathing in the sultry air. But what perfect teeth she displayed! Two bundles of cheese in white cloth held securely to the top of her head a voluminous white veil which floated far down her back. Over her native Palestinian dress of blue wool trimmed with bands of cross-stitch embroidery and bright cloth, she wore a light-blue quilted coat such as would have been more appropriate for an unheated Chinese house in winter than for a summer walk over the hills of Judæa. But she believed in armoring herself stoutly against the lances of the sun.

As she came to a standstill we heard the unmistakable whimper of a very young child concealed under her veil. And when we expressed surprise and pleasure she

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lifted her draperies and revealed a charming specimen of babyhood, cleanly attired and resting cozily in a cradle of bright woollen homespun strapped to her back by cords running around her forehead and under her chin. Here was an Arab version of the Indian papoose.

If the mother's veil threatened to shut off the baby's air supply it at least shielded him from the burning glare and the clouds of dust kicked up by her long full skirt as her cowhide sandals slumped along the loose soil of the footpath.

What a contrast there was between this little new citizen of Judah and the ancient gray walls against which he was silhouetted on his patient mother's back! Look at the massive courses of stone, alternating with smaller ones of varying size which have been guarding the City of Peace through hoary centuries, and then consider the frailty of such little white-bonneted heads as this on which the future Palestine rests.

This mother had just visited the health station of the new Zionist clinic, which extends its services to Arab as well as Jew. As she pointed to her destination on the other side of the Kedron Valley with the crude houses of the village glaring in the intense morning light, we felt sorry that she could not anticipate "cool Siloam's shady rill" at the end of her walk. For this exists only in the uninstructed imagination of a hymnist, who might more accurately draw his local color from the leper colony at the far edge of Silwān or from the Arab

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"fellahin" who live in the rock-hewn sepulchers of the community. Modern Siloam is built over a honeycomb of tombs, which precludes the possibility of the Jewish town of Bible times being on this site. More probably this was a section of Jerusalem itself. The circumstance is just another illustration of the Palestinian's habit of carrying old names with him when settlements are relocated—as in the case of Jericho.

If the unimportant Arab village of Silwân could be removed, there is great probability that tombs dating from the period of the Hebrew kings would be discovered. But we cannot blame little mothers like the one in our picture for objecting to anything which would disrupt households or add one jot to the heavy burden of their daily life. For many a village mother of Judæa to-day has few more conveniences than Mary had at Nazareth.

A CUMBERED MOTHER OF BETHANY

In the untidy Moslem village of Bethany we came upon a perfect illustration of this dearth of household equipment.

We had been dreaming among the ruined masonry of a house which we knew could not be "the home of Mary and Martha," as our guide wished us to think, but which nevertheless helped vivify the visits of Jesus to this village on the eastern slope of Olivet. There was no more likelihood of this being historic than of the more pretentious one across the way being the house

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of Simon who entertained Christ at a banquet just a few days before his last Passover.

Yet it did us no harm to sit on the stones where someone's guest room with its thick, cooling walls had been and to notice the smoked chimney-place where someone's kitchen fire had burned with hospitality. We were certainly not far, in any event, from the place where Martha had come to complain, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister did leave me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me." Or from the road where this same troubled sister went out to meet Jesus when her brother lay in his tomb. Certainly, the general appearance of little Bethany to-day with its mud-colored houses clambering up the mountainside which lifts one flat roof above another, with its boys laughing and waving to passers-by from cool caves or the shade of olive trees, would not look wholly foreign to Jesus should he walk this way again.

With such thoughts in mind, we turned a corner and came suddenly upon a stalwart matron of Bethany advancing over the loose stones of a narrow street. Not only was she "cumbered" with a heavy basket of food-stuff but she was carrying *her stove on her head!* A crude earthen affair it was, with holes below for the insertion of fuel. And on top of the stove this toilsome mother was carrying a willow tray full of cooking vessels.

It was very evident that our village Martha had cause for complaint. Yet when we inquired her name,

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she replied something which sounded like "Olya," which, as we later learned, means "Superior."

Surely, only a *very superior* woman would be willing to carry such burdens for her family with such graceful good-nature in the morning heat.

A CAPERNAUM MADONNA

Capernaum of Galilee, the garrison town and busy lake-port on a great highway which Jesus made the capital of his teaching ministry, is associated with prominent events which occurred there. Yet one of the dominant impressions we carried away from the fascinating ruins of "Tell Hûm," at the northeast corner of Gennesaret, is of an intimate domestic scene.

A grove of date-palms, heavy with August fruit, and the Church of the Franciscans led us to the very significant ruins now in process of excavation. So completely have Christ's words been fulfilled, "And thou, Capernaum, . . . shalt go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained until this day," that scholars have not yet agreed as to whether Tell Hûm is its site. But certainly some very notable town, probably brought down by earthquake, was here. And the discovery of a noble synagogue, suggesting the centurion-builder, has fostered this idea. Whether the Corinthian colonnade and carved façade being re-erected to-day are due to this man of authority whose faith was quickened by the healing power of Christ, or whether

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it is a structure of the second or third century on the site of an earlier one in which Christ may have preached, the remains are the most imposing that have come to light in this community, which never was distinguished by great public buildings, such as those left by Greece and Egypt. When scholars have completed their task of setting the tumbled stones of this sanctuary again in place we shall see a superb example of man's effort to express his devotion to God on a site incomparably fair. For it is only a few steps from the hexagonal forecourt now unearthed, down to the stones where blue Galilee laps the shore, echoing the voice of the Master and mirroring the hills where he met the multitude. How we are hoping that the spade will yet upturn some recorded message of Christ or locate his headquarters which Mark had so definitely in mind when he wrote: "And they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house, he asked them, What were ye reasoning on the way?" And again: "And when he entered again into Capernaum after some days, it was noised that he was in the house" (or at home). Could this have been the dwelling place of Peter, and surely, then, not far from the boat-lined shore?

But thrilling as is the synagogue found at Capernaum, the simple domestic relics which have been arranged under the palm trees, where one may comfortably sit among them to ruminate, are eloquent of a people who left no jeweled heritage, but a collection of potsherds and household utensils. And among the

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silences of bulky oil-presses, primitive stoves of stone, and grain mills—some small and others massive enough to be carried by huge sticks inserted in their bowls—we heard the *cooing of a baby*, not far away.

Think of it! A new living creature just coming to a discovery of himself among ruins the centuries have buried. Robert Browning, hearing this, would have been inspired to write another “Love Among the Ruins.”

Following the sound, we came to a neatly white-washed house near the gate of the Franciscan property. A peep through the wide-open door showed us the cool interior of a room immaculately clean and furnished with a cupboard and a narrow iron bed which had somehow been transported *down* “to Capernaum.” On its one chair a serene young mother sat with her sewing. Swinging from the rafters in a cloth cradle, her four-months old son was kept happy by the motion stimulated by a rope under his mother’s foot. A white cloth fastened to the swing above his head drove away the flies and gnats of Capernaum.

Everyone was happy. Life was rosy with promise. Christ hovered very near this sanctifying scene, for was it not in Capernaum that he had one day taken a little child of Galilee and setting him in the midst of disciples contending for power, said, “Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven”?

Elizabeth Barrett Browning felt the overwhelming

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tenderness of some such a holy glimpse as this, when she wrote:

“As the moths around a taper,
As the bees around a rose,
As the gnats around a vapor,
So the spirits group and close
Round about a holy childhood as if drinking its repose.”

MOTHERLESS MADONNAS AT OLD SIDON

The whole scene brought to mind another we had looked upon in the former palace of an old Druse prince at Sidon on the Phœnician coast. Here we had tiptoed at twilight into a marble-floored upper room formerly used by the childless wife of the Pasha. Row upon row of motherless Armenian babies, fair and beautiful and pure, now lay there with arms up tossed in the matchless grace of sleep, while motherless young girls hovered about in the dusk, each carefully watching her own little charge. Never shall we forget that night under Syrian stars, when we could not sleep, for very consciousness of angels leaning low above us to guard those “infants’ slumbers, pure and sweet,” surrounded by an old Phœnician garden.

“MATERNA”

Men may continue to sing “O Mother dear, *Jerusalem*,” but always for us, *Bethlehem* will incarnate the memories of Judah’s motherhood. It means “House of Bread.” I wish it might be translated, “House of

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and Mary, although her uncritical faith led later centuries into many errors of site—Helena, mother of Constantine, the first Christian ruler of the Roman Empire.

We cannot think of Mary in the stifling crypt where a silver star and fifteen burning lamps speak less certainly of the spot where Christ was born than of the Crimean War which sprang from a feud concerning it. Asbestos walls and bullet holes made by priests of Christ lend no aid to the imagination here. We cannot think of Mary when we stand in a dismal nave where contending sects allowed the dust of a quarter of a century to collect, until removed by a Moslem soldier. Much less can we think of her in the absurd "Milk Grotto," where revolting legends reach their climax in an effort to explain the whiteness of the cavern by one miraculous drop of milk which fell from Mary's breast while she was resting on her way from Egypt. Absurd biscuits of rock dust are now sold to visitors who are mothers.

No, Mary does not become real to us in such man-made settings as these. I see her, rather, resting on a high hillside, above the Shepherds' Field, looking away to the refreshing of olive orchards and green fields growing in the deep valley at her feet. And I find her walking again among the virtuous mothers of Bethlehem who, with immaculate high headdress of mediæval type, go back and forth on the dignified errands of home, in the open square bounded by the Nativity Church at one end and the Moslem mosque at the other.

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Most of all, when Bethlehem is asleep, do Christ and Mary become real to us, when above her

“. . . deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by,
Yet in [her] dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light.
How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessing of his heaven.”

Even the grandmothers of this chiefly Christian town have an air of friendly virtue. I remember one we saw sitting in the cool entrance-court to her house with a cross painted over it, as is the manner of Christian Bethlehemites. Like the woman in the oracle of King Lemuel, “which his mother taught him,” she was laying her hand to the spindle, winding yarn which would enable her household to laugh at the winter to come.

In just such homes as hers, whether in Judæa or America, the Christ is born to-day.

HOW FAR TO BETHLEHEM?

“How far is it to Bethlehem Town?”
“Just over Jerusalem hills adown,
Past lovely Rachel’s white-domed tomb—
Sweet shrine of motherhood’s young doom.

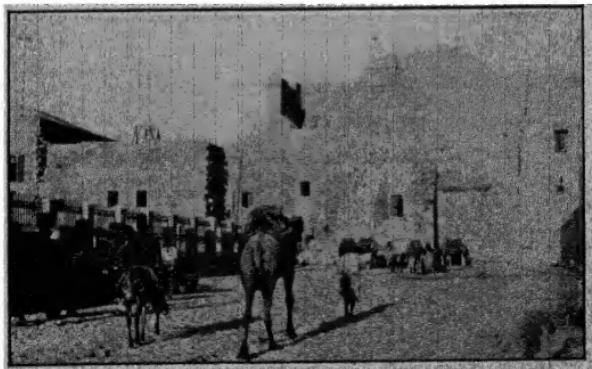
“It isn’t far to Bethlehem Town—
Just over the dusty roads adown,
Past Wise Men’s well, still offering

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Cool drafts from welcome wayside spring;
Past shepherds with their flutes of reed
That charm the woolly sheep they lead;
Past boys with kites on hilltops flying,
And soon you're there where Bethlehem's lying,
Sunned white and sweet on olived slopes,
Gold-lighted still with Judah's hopes."

And so, we find the Shepherds' field
And plain that gave rich Boaz yield;
And look where Herod's villa stood.
We thrill that earthly parenthood
Could foster Christ who was all-good;
And thrill that Bethlehem Town to-day
Looks down on Christian homes that pray.

It isn't far to Bethlehem Town!
*It's anywhere that Christ comes down
And finds in people's friendly face
A welcome and abiding place.
The road to Bethlehem runs right through
The homes of folks like me and you.*



CHAPTER XIII

THE HOST

"Forget not to show love unto strangers."

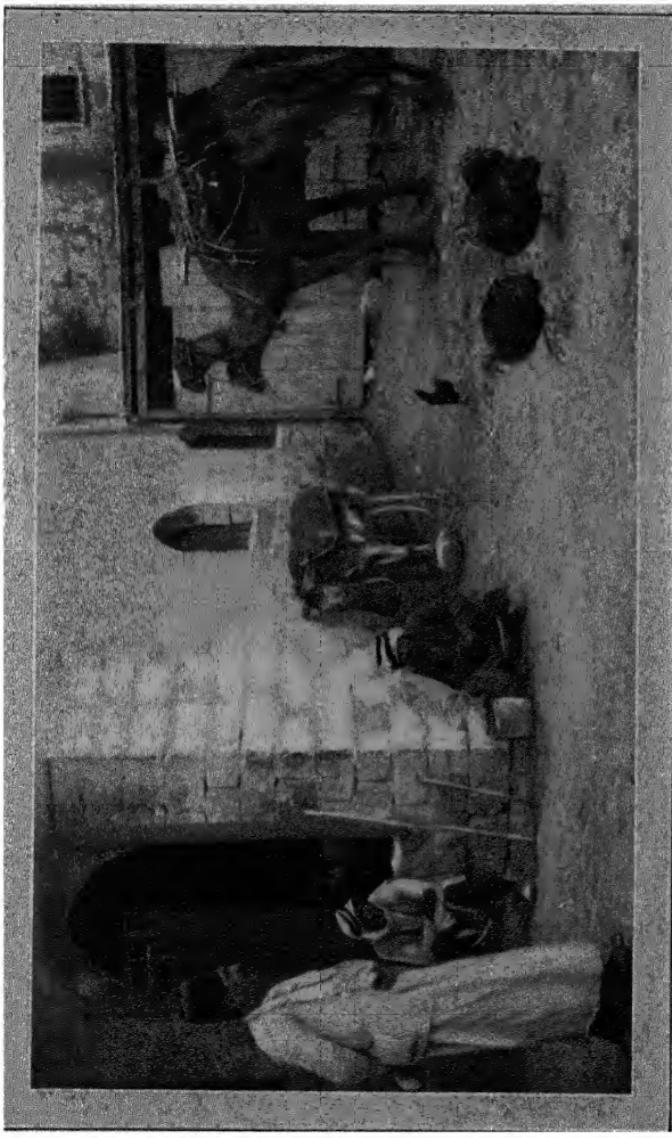
IT is not hard to understand why the Bethlehem innkeeper had no room for Mary and Joseph. Oriental "khans" are so small even to-day that it does not take a large group of new arrivals to make them "complét."

Even their food supply is managed on a narrow margin. If two or three guests help themselves overgenerously to dessert, it becomes necessary for the others to wait—as we did at Nazareth—until the resourceful host improvises a delicious French pancake which is at length brought in by a serious-faced waiter wearing a velvet-collared jacket over his striped garment.

Moreover, guests usually arrive in groups. Travellers seldom go singly over the highways of Palestine and Syria. Considerations of safety, convenience, and companionship preclude this for both tourists and natives, like the group seen in the opposite picture.

IN A NAZARETH INN-YARD

This shows a portion of a camel caravan which has just arrived in the courtyard of a Nazareth inn—not the



NEW ARRIVALS AT A PALESTINE INN

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sort, however, which caters to foreign guests. Other "khans" are entertaining the remainder of the caravan of twenty camels. The little donkey who has been leading the train all the way west from Damascus has his nose already buried in a well-earned measure of grain. The cameleer is waiting for the innkeeper, who has just come out to inquire the latest news from the interior. From the doorway peers the face of a maid-servant, cocking her ears to "listen in" to the courtyard gossip.

Scrawny chickens—usually so undersized in Syria that one feels ashamed to eat them—and a few turkeys destined for future dinners strut about in search of stray kernels. The squalor of such an innyard as this makes us look with favor on the tradition that Christ was born in a *hillside cave* of Bethlehem.

I used to entertain a grudge against the inconsiderate innkeeper to whom Joseph applied for lodging. But since being in "his own country" I can understand that, however willing he might have been to accommodate the weary pair, he was helpless. It is not for the host to make distinctions among his guests. It is purely a matter of first come first served. Nor can we accuse Joseph of being negligent, for had he wished to reserve a place ahead of time there would have been no way for him to communicate with the innkeeper.

But the entertainment of the Near East is not to be understood from the conduct of a professional host. It is best appreciated in the tent of an Arab, who hospitably

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draws a rain-soaked guest out of the darkness of desert night onto his warm wool rug, offers him a coat from his mother's weaving, and claps his hands for a servant to bring him a roast kid and steaming rice. Lack-ing this opportunity, one's next best chance is enter-tainment in a native home. To us a brief experience of this came most unexpectedly one night in Jerusalem.

A NOCTURNAL PILGRIMAGE

"Would you be afraid to go out to the Mount of Olives with me by night?" my Fellow Pilgrim asked. "With the British in control, there is nothing to fear."

Now, I thought of certain road stretches we had crossed safely by day but which had witnessed hold-ups later, after dark. Yet our dragoman said that peo-ple often motored out by night to get a glimpse of the Holy City's little lights. But we resented the thought of a motor and guide for such a pilgrimage. So we compromised on a two-horse brougham in an alarming state of decay, driven by a mute, black driver from Tripoli who knew not a word of English. Elias engaged him for us at the Tower of David and ex-plained to him that he was to go up to the Mount of Olives and continue along its crest until by signs we indicated that we wished to return to Jerusalem. His head was swathed in a ragged Oriental turban and his tight-fitting old jacket certainly went back to the days of the Turkish regime.

As we clattered up the street leaving our smiling

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Elias behind, we felt as if we were indeed off "on our own," glad to be rid of our professional "protector." Full of self-respect, we rattled on iron tires up through the main street of the new Jerusalem, outside the walls where at least some of the shops were closed, out of respect to the British sense of Sabbath.

It was only nine o'clock. Yet there was scarcely a pedestrian abroad. Eastern cities which are so clotted and clogged with humanity by day have a queer way of emptying themselves by night, to the point even of desertion. Often we have wondered where all the people congested in Jerusalem alleyways by day go to sleep at night. They must retreat into the outlying villages of Judæa. Surely, this Sunday night, it was as if, in John's words, they had gone "every man into his own home." At just such an hour the lonely Christ was wont to go out afoot to the Mount of Olives, finding the refreshment of prayer and of sleep, that he might return to the Temple in the morning to continue his teaching.

A SONG OF ASCENTS

Scarcely had we passed the Allenby Hotel than our mute Tripolitan alighted from his box and disappeared in a cavelike shop, leaving us and the brougham in the middle of the street. We pictured him indulging in all sorts of refreshment. But his errand soon proved quite innocent, when he returned bringing two tallow candles which he inserted in the rusty lamps which

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bobbed and twisted themselves in a most unsteady manner as we proceeded:

The carriage route does not take the shorter road through Saint Stephen's Gate, down to the Kedron Valley and through Gethsemane to Olivet, such as Christ would naturally use. It runs, rather, along the city wall and up the long ridge of the Mount of Olives. With Jerusalem behind us, buildings became fewer; and black spaces of night between them, wider gulfs of potential alarm. Sometimes a pair of men would pass, in low-voiced conversation. At such times it usually happened that our tremulous lamps had twisted themselves around so that their light fell upon us rather than upon the road, giving the curious natives a fine chance to scrutinize us while we could detect nothing about them.

A delightful night breeze was by now stirring across the mountain-top. We wrapped our coats about us and marveled that Palestine could be so cool anywhere in August. We knew that the wind was carrying the refreshing of Jerusalem night off toward the desert wastes which lay between us and the burning valley of the Dead Sea.

On our left once a gleaming gateway flashed through the dark and we knew that we were passing the War Cemetery where twenty-five hundred boys of the British forces who gave their lives in the last crusade for the Holy City were honored by interment near the Garden where the world's supremest sacrifice began. We had passed it by day, admiring the chaste sim-

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plicity of its chapel, inscribed: "Their name liveth evermore," and thinking of Gettysburg as we saw the rows of markers ranged behind the gate with its inscription telling that the ground had been given by Moslems. That night, under the great, near stars of Palestine, this silent little city of God whispered the world's reiteration of those words of Christ, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

The Milky Way spanned the whole sky with a misty arch of silver, bridging Jerusalem, only dimly lighted, with Olivet's dark brow. It was Christ's triumphal arch, surmounting the valley of his agony. "It is finished," the night wind whispered. "He is risen!" the stars replied. Here on the ridge of his ascension what mattered the hot feuds of sects for places of honor in his city? Somewhere in the olived garden slopes beneath us, on a Judæan night as beautiful, perhaps as this, the Saviour had triumphed over fear and had nerved himself to shoulder the whole world's cross of woe. This is the thing that matters supremely.

The sense of Sabbath stillness increased our apprehension—or mine, at least—as we continued through the dark. It would have been so easy for an Arab to step from the shadowy roadside or a culvert and penalize our rashness. That our sense of anxiety was not groundless became apparent when we passed a small coffee house along the roadside in the summit village of Tûr. A group of long-skirted Moslem men were

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sipping their late evening coffee on the sidewalk, while the music of a cheap phonograph rent the sanctity of the night.

We alighted from our low vehicle and motioned our mute Tripolitan that we were only going a few paces down the road for a view and would soon return. We wanted to brood over the city, alone, and think of Him who had so often looked upon her helplessness and longed to gather her under the wings of his spirit.

But scarcely had we set foot on the road when we were aware that someone was following us. Looking back, we recognized the gaunt figure of an Arab, rapidly overtaking us. Entirely in the dark as to his purpose, we continued toward the little mosque where we expected to gain an unobstructed panorama of sky and of Jerusalem, shut romantically within her walls in the hush of Sabbath. After a few paces, the Arab called out in a powerful voice, "Halt, there! You had better not go farther down the road alone. It is not safe for you. Wait!"

Of course we halted.

"Come up in this minaret with me and you shall really see Jerusalem by night," he continued in beautiful English.

We declined with thanks, yet trembled lest we offend his hospitable spirit. But he continued: "I saw when you were passing our café that you were Americans and alone. I knew it was not safe for you to proceed on the dark road. I used to belong to the desert police.

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It is not for nothing that I am a Moslem Arab. I know how to shoot. I am going to look after you."

At this, we all halted at the brow of the hill. It was plain that we two were to have no further opportunity for communion out here. It was quite the same as at the Gizeh pyramids, where "sons of the sheik" thrust their service upon us and finally drove us back from the desert long before we wanted to leave. The Orient cannot suffer folks to be alone. It cannot understand that there are times when one prefers solitude.

Making the best of the situation, we determined to learn as much as possible from our gracious protector, and he, true to the love of his tribe for talk, was glad to launch into a vivid autobiography.

OUR ARAB HOST

"My family are neither too rich nor too poor. I do not want to go to America, like our neighbor who went and is so rich that he now sends thousands of "piasters" a year to his old father. The Mount of Olives is my home and I want to remain here. My father owns that large white house down the slope a bit, yonder, and we all live there. My brother, who was a leading dragoman of Jerusalem, was killed last year in a motor accident, so his family live in a portion of our home. You see, we Arabs often live rather as a little tribe. Each family has separate apartments and we all eat in a common dining room. I am married and have three young children. The last one—three months old—is a boy."

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Here in his narrative he chuckled proudly. "*I knew this one would be a boy.* Allah would not leave me without a fighter for Islam. Boys make good soldiers."

Here, at last, was our opportunity to see a Moslem home!

Our veiled hint as to such a possibility drew forth an enthusiastic invitation from our self-appointed protector. The Easterner is so responsive to the slightest social stimulus!

Plainly flattered, he led us eagerly down a little path on the side of the mountain facing Jerusalem, to a substantial two-story native house of plaster and stone. It was white and, of course, flat-roofed. We followed him up narrow stairs to an open court, from which doors opened on the right and left. All were closed. It was but ten o'clock but the household was very evidently asleep. Our host remarked: "You must know we never allow our women to go out at night. But it is too stuffy in-doors for us men."

On the right-hand door he began to pound with noisy authority. Our situation was more fortunate than that of the man in the parable of the narrow door, who stood at the goodman's house and knocked but was gruffly greeted, "Trouble me not; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed." For we had the master of the house with us.

When the door did not open promptly, he pounded again, more sternly, and gave an authoritative word of command in Arabic.

THE HOST

This time the result came, "Because of his importunity." And our host ushered us delightedly into the large room which constituted his portion of the paternal dwelling. By means of a lamp which he hurriedly lighted, we saw that several mats were spread on the floor and on the center one, an extremely beautiful young woman—dark, placid, unsurprised—was sitting upright, fully attired in voluminous robes. She actually smiled, just as if she had not been rudely awakened from the night's first sweet sleep. On her right, two healthy little girls were dreaming snugly among the covers, and at her left, was a long swathed bundle snugly enveloping the new boy for whose hand the sword of Allah was waiting. As Eastern hospitality is seldom issued in the name of a woman, our host offered no introduction to his wife or any explanation of our coming. Fancy an American husband ushering total strangers into his wife's boudoir thus unannounced!

"See, this is the boy," said the Arab as he tapped the bundle lightly with his foot. "These two are girls," he added, lifting them up by their heads, not too roughly, for us to admire them. "I send them to an English school now. They learn three languages and sewing. Since the War we are giving even girls more education."

THE NEW MOSLEM HOME

He commented on his wife's being unveiled.

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"Yes, I had her take off her veil so that she could better care for the children," he explained. "When she was taking them to the doctor's how could she see where she was going? But if I want to, I can make her put it on again to-morrow."

There was no doubt as to who was master in this household! For him, the only real bed in the room was waiting near the tightly closed window.

"Please let my wife make you some Persian tea. It is very fine," he insisted, as the young woman smiled prettily from her mat.

We had no appetite for it, yet were fearful of offending his hospitality.

"Oh, it is too late for your wife to make a fire to-night and prepare tea for us," we tactfully declined.

"Oh, it is good for her. She doesn't mind," he insisted. Then, fortunately for us, he had an inspiration to take everything out of his treasure chest to show us—trinkets he had accumulated through the years. The things that surprised us most were postcards of the Hotel Commodore and the Statue of Liberty—his chief prizes.

"A reverend doctor from New York sent me these," he said. "He taught me English while he was here and gave me a little Bible to learn reading. But I find it quite as difficult to make out as my Koran."

For an instant we thought he was open to a change in his way of belief, but such a hope was soon dispelled when he added, "To be a good dragoman, one must

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know the Christian Bible and so be able to explain the places of Jerusalem to the people."

His interest in the Scripture was purely commercial!

The rest of his worthless treasures frankly bored us. The air in the room, with seven of us shut in without a breath of ventilation, became unbearable. We waxed impatient at our host's egotism and his utter inconsiderateness of his family's desire to sleep. Yet, with true Arabic gift for postponing the time of his guests' departure, he found excuse for more and more talk.

When, at last, he detected that we were restless to get back to Jerusalem, he led us again into the open court, where the spangled sky was intensified in brilliance by the focus of the well-like inclosure.

Narrowly we escaped his determination to take us to the coffee house ostensibly, to "hear the phonograph," but actually, to be "shown off" to his friends who were eagerly awaiting his return. We diverted his attention to the "reverend doctor" in New York.

"Yes," he said, pulling an old calling card from his wallet, "will you please telephone him when you get home and tell him I am studying to succeed my excellent brother? His number is Plaza 53012."

It is hard to describe how it seemed to be hearing a Manhattan telephone exchange mentioned out in the night on Olivet.

A TURBAN SAVES THE NIGHT

But another unexpected incident was to punctuate

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our nocturnal drive. Half way down the ridge the left trace of the harness broke and our horses came to an intelligent standstill. Quickly our mute coachman alighted, turned the accommodating old lamp around to inspect the damage. It looked as if nothing could be done. The rotten leather had given way and there was nothing at hand which was strong enough to mend it. It appeared as though we would have to return to Jerusalem alone, and without light. Unlike Thomas, we knew whither we were going, but how could we know the way?

Then it was that we discovered the nine hundred and ninety-ninth use to which an Eastern turban may be put!

Tearing off a long strip of his head-gear, our ebony driver somehow eked out the torn trace and before long we were again rattling down the lonely road, expecting momentarily that the harness would give way again.

But like many a make-shift risk of the resourceful East, the broken trace got us safely back to the Tower of David, where not even a policeman was in sight, though swarms of humanity are constantly milling about this open space by day.

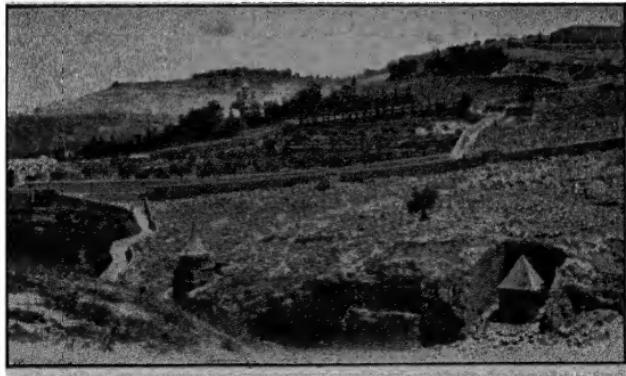
We had not gotten such a soul full of star-scape and of meditation as we had expected, nor had we dreamed our fill of the eternal things of Olivet, Gethsemane, and little Kedron Valley beneath Jerusalem's east wall. But we had learned that men of hostile creeds may be brotherly and safe when there is mutual trust.

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Where, formerly, we had made Mohammedans synonymous with Armenian massacres and the sum total of villainy, we now understood that they may make very good hosts. If anyone had told us that when we reached Jerusalem we would fraternize with one who in Armageddon had thrown in his lot with Turkey and the Kaiser and had been defeated, we would have been incredulous.

Had we gone armed and suspicious, like the undiplomatic French petty officials who sometimes encase themselves in armored cars to cross the Arabian desert, there might have been a different story to tell.

There is nothing like a request for hospitality for disarming antagonists, of whatever land.



CHAPTER XIV DEAD SEA FOLKS

"I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God
Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

ATENT-FLAP view of life is superlative. Canyas-framed vistas are the essence of art, whether in the green depths of Canadian woodlands or in the deserts of the Jordan Plain. Never shall we see a more holy perspective than the Sea of Galilee sparkling between the tent-poles of a Druse refugee family, eating their noon meal under a sprawling black canvas stretched above a foundation of twig and grass. But the tent in Galilee is an "immigrant." The sections just this side of the Mountains of Moab are the fatherland of "such as dwell in tents."

For an hour and a half we had been dropping farther and farther down from the high places of Jerusalem to the depression of the Dead Sea country, submerged thirteen hundred feet below the Mediterranean. The Wilderness known as "Jeshimon" or "Devastation" was giving way to a plain, fantastically ornamented with sand and salt dunes. The first clouds we had seen in many days hung over the fifty-mile stretch of heavy waters.

BEDOUTIN AT HOME ALONG THE DEAD SEA



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All sorts of misty mirages played tricks upon us—"images of wind and confusion," phantasies of salt mist and sun. A great industrial center loomed before us, with the smoke of prosperity puffing from houses, factories, and locomotives. We were just about to ask Elias what this great town was when it freakishly transformed itself into giant caravan of camels, as suddenly as the baby in "Alice in Wonderland" turned into a pig. We had been fooled by a phantom of those vanished Cities of the Plain, which have so defied efforts at identification that some have given them a legendary site at the bottom of the Great Salt Sea. We were thankful for the definite reality of two black ravens who were poking about the prickly grasses alongside our car as though still searching food for Elijah.

Yet, our mirage helped us appreciate the tremendously clever camouflage army which General Allenby faked in this same atmosphere. By throwing thousands of old horse blankets over bushes, pitching hundreds of tents brought up from Egypt and firing captured guns into the hills of Moab, the British commander-in-chief faked the German scouting planes into seeing two whole new divisions spread out along the Jordan Valley from the Dead Sea, north toward Galilee. The tricks of the atmosphere had almost as much to do with putting across this clever hoax as the device itself, which has been called the best bit of strategy since the horse of Troy.

What must it have been when with "brimstone-and-

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fire" effects added to all the normal mirages of this unearthly atmosphere, Abraham looked "toward all the land of the Plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the land went up as the smoke of a furnace." The poet of the Song of Songs must have been familiar with these local phenomena when he exclaimed:

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness
Like pillars of smoke? . . .
Behold, it is the litter of Solomon;
Threescore mighty men are about it."

We wondered why in the world Lot had chosen this parcel of land when Abram, after the quarrel of their herdsmen, generously gave him first choice of the land. The unobservant nephew must have been reckoning only on those "willows along the watercourses" of the Jordan, and not upon this deathly desert. "Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the Plain of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before Jehovah destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, like the garden of Jehovah, like the land of Egypt." Arabs have complimented his taste by calling the Dead Sea "The Sea of Lot."

FAMILIES OF DUNES

Certainly the phantom shapes of the dunes made Lot and his family very real to us that fiery morning. Some of them looked laughably like an enlarged Mrs. Lot, with a pillar-like physique and sphinxy head. Smaller ones nearby suggested those daughters who fled with

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her from Sodom. These were much more entertaining to us, even in their evanescent form, than the traditional "pillar of salt" which camels have nearly licked out of existence. Other dunes took on the shape of vases, or Arabian horses, or giant table-tops. Some of them were of soft blue-fox shade, very pleasing against the feverish blue of the sky. Parallel to these and nearer the Sea ran a row of whiter salt dunes. Then a stretch of rusty, choked plain with thorn-brush and scurvy grasses. Off to the north there was a hopeful ribbon of green which we surmised to be the longitudinal oasis of the Jordan Valley.

As we stood on the pebbly shore of the Sea of Death we were at first mocked by its beauty. Could anything so intensely blue, so radiantly transparent, merit the calumny always leveled at it? Bounded on the east by the Mountains of Moab, with Pisgah's peak of promise beyond, it wanted nothing in beauty. It should have served an ample ministry to its surrounding valley. It looked worthy of giving life.

Yet over all its broad surface no creature flies. Though its depths reach down thirteen hundred feet, they offer no fish for man's reward. When we waded knee-deep in its waters thinking we would be refreshed, we emerged with a mucilaginous coating of salt-brine and sulphur and potash which were ample proof of the heavy mineral deposits buried in its bosom.

The Jordan itself and four or five other streams pour their contents into its selfish basin. And it tries to hold

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them all. Like some people who constantly receive but never give, its toll is *forced* from it by nature's process of evaporation—evaporation so rapid, over sands so burning that it gives birth to those monstrous creatures of mirage. It is as if the mediæval inferno has here broken through the surface of the earth. Why scholars enthuse over the discovery of Vergil's Avernus Lake in Italy when the Dead Sea is available for imagery of Hades, we cannot understand. It is the sum total of desolation.

"SCUM O' THE EARTH"

Yet, no matter how undesirable a place may be for habitation some specimen of humanity always turns up to claim it. And only a few feet from where those saltiest waters of earth lap the sticky pebbles of the lowest beach in the world, a family of Bedouin had pitched their tent. They all looked as if they might have survived from patriarchal days. Their home was a strip of black canvas, held up by six forked sticks, whose very presence in this treeless land was a mystery. No side curtains were attached for privacy, but a few shreds of the striped red and black cloth loved by every Arab were thrown at random over the canopy. At one end there was the semblance of a single home-made cot. This was for the "sheik" himself. A high pile of ragged bedding was ready for the rest of the family to spread upon the sands. At the opposite end, nearest the sea, a one-armed woman was grinding meal

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in a huge bowl nestled in the pebbles. She was evidently the maid-servant of the desert establishment, for two other women were loitering in the blazing sun which had already burned their skin to a deep bronze. Each of them had a group of bronzed children tugging at her skirts. The little girls' hair looked as if it had not been combed since birth. A single layer of ragged cloth which had never been cut into any shape, hung somehow over their well-formed little bodies, for their slender arms and expressive hands were as comely as those of children of gentle birth. Health glowed from their round cheeks and well-developed forms, yet garden greens were unknown to them. Merry smiles played on faces quite unprotected from a sun which threatened momentarily to reduce them to molten bronze. The greater dignity of one mother, and the crudely ornamental goats-hair rings which held her black veil, led us to christen her *Sarah*, while the humbler woman, to whose skirts but one child clung and whose every movement spelled an inferiority consciousness, led us to call her *Hagar*.

SUB-SEA LEVEL SUBURBAN LIFE

The husband of these two burly wives was sauntering along the shore, in apparent satisfaction with life. In fact, he was singing in the sun. We could not understand his ditty but supposed from his expression that it was a Bedouin version of "Everybody works but father." He was the picture of cactuslike content. His wives

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and children gave him satisfaction; a few "baksheesh" for helping the man who had a lemonade stand for tourists a half mile up the shore gave him sufficient cash in a land where there was nothing to buy. The momentary tarryings of visitors in this burning inferno satisfied his Arab social instinct. The land was not wholly without advantages. It was too hot for work, even if any employment had been available; yet by night, just hot enough to sleep comfortably on the open shore. For health this land of salt and heat has many advantages. Its torrid atmosphere restored as by magic my voice, which had been gone since Nazareth.

We wondered where our Dead Sea folks could possibly secure water, in this country which Isaiah seems to have described perfectly: "The poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst." What a blessing it would have been, if this wilderness could have seen a "pool of water, and the dry land, springs of water"; if in the leafless wilderness, the acacia, the myrtle and the oil-tree had been set; and the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree, "that they may . . . understand together, that the hand of Jehovah hath done this."

Human beings seem to take on the characteristics of their environment. We had a feeling that if we should analyze this group of Bedouin, we would find their blood as saline as the sea they haunt. Their flesh seemed coarse and brown as the meal the maid-servant ground. We should not have been surprised at any

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moment to see them dry up into dunes and blow across the plain, or, by process of evaporation, become pillars of salt. These children of Ishmael had "journeyed and spread [their] tent" in the most undesirable of earth's empty spaces. Theirs was surely not an ideal suburb for the rearing of a family!

Looking upon this desert ménage, we could appreciate some of the dreads of the primitive patriarchs. We wondered if they ever had "thorns in their tents"—an agony described by Hosea. Or if, like Jeremiah's woeful man, they ever had reason to cry: "My tent is destroyed, and all my cords are broken: My children are gone forth from me, and they are not: there is none to spread my tent any more, and to set up my curtains."

Dead Sea places make Dead Sea faces. Nomadic tents make fluid habits. And fluid habits may either degenerate into the flabbiness of a shiftless content like our Bedouin, or they may develop into the resourcefulness of an Abraham who did not drive his tent pins down on these desolate shores but was all his life on a trek from Chaldea to Canaan, from Bethel to Egypt; up to Moriah or down to Hebron on the great adventures of his patriarchal faith.

It would not have been complimentary to Abraham to base our picture of him on these Dead Sea folks. Yet we could not help wondering if he bore any resemblance. Certainly, he was more affluent, being "very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold." Our poor Bedouin boasted not a single goat. The "friend of God," too,

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had a spiritual capacity which enabled him to see angelic visitors at his tent door and dispense to them an instinctive desert hospitality which was utterly lacking here. Even if we had been angels, our Dead Sea patriarch could not have had his Sarah "make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes." Nor did he have any herd to which he could run to "fetch a calf, tender and good." Nor was there any tree at his door under which he could seat us to enjoy the "butter and the milk, and the calf" had they been forthcoming.

IN THE PLAINS OF JERICHO

So we shook the dust of the Dead Salt plain from our shoes and sped away toward Isaiah's "willows along the watercourses" of Jordan that were calling us pleasantly to "The Pilgrims' Bathing Place" by way of Jericho.

Now, there are three Jerichos in the Dead Sea section. We realized this as we stood on the "tells," or mounds, of accumulated rubbish from which enough masonry has been excavated to identify it as the site of Joshua's city and looked across to the Herodian Jericho of Jesus' day, a mile to the south. A short distance east were the palms and houses of the living Jericho, a squalid town where women and camels still travel to roadside fountains for their water supply. Its only resemblance to ancient Jericho is the garden of palms surrounding its mosque.

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To-day bleak, pulverized brown mounds, ground down by the war march of the centuries, mark the site of the ancient Jericho, the first city west of Jordan to fall before Joshua's army. As we realized its temperature we understood why the inhabitants gave way with little resistance. Considerable excavation has been done here by German archæologists and amazing traces of curiously constructed masonry resting on huge square stones have been revealed.

WAR ON THE JERICHO WALLS

One such scholar happened to be visiting the principal mounds as we were. He made an insinuating complaint to us that our Arab guide had not shown us the correct site of Rahab's house or the outer and inner course of the walls. It looked for a moment as though there would be a fresh war in ancient Jericho, as our Elias resentfully retorted with inborn hatred of the Arab for the German: "You show your own party what you like. I show mine. I know more about Jericho than you. This is my own country."

Meantime we ignored the dispute by focusing attention on the superb panorama of desolate plain and wilderness grandeur about us. Far up in the rocky cliffs behind us nestled the hermit monastery of Saint George, looking down on the site of Jericho of Jesus' day and on the hazy mountains of Transjordania. In the nearer foreground lay an extensive oasis, most refreshing to the eye. Dwarf dates, palms, orange groves,

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figs, and massy greenness were flourishing there. The explanation of this specimen of a land flowing with "milk and honey" lay just across the road from the principal mounds: Elisha's Fountain was sending forth an ample volume of sparkling water. At the moment substantial repairs were being made to the stone masonry of a little reservoir from which conduits carried water down to the gardens below—a prophecy of what the new Zionist colonists hope to do extensively with the Jordan Valley section by tapping the historic stream for irrigation purposes. Some of us risked tasting the cool waters which Elisha was called upon to sweeten by casting salt in them when the "men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, we pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, . . . but the water is bad, and the land miscarrieth." The ancient words of Second Kings, "so the waters were healed unto this day" seemed verified by our grateful palates.

FOLLOWING ELIJAH TO THE JORDAN

Elijah had been in Jericho on his long leave-taking from Elisha and had tried to depart from his successor here. But still refusing to let Elijah go, Elisha had trudged on to the Jordan. In his steps we followed through that strange, untenanted country which so appealed to John the Baptist. So great is the visibility here, due to the dry, clear atmosphere, that tall Arabs swinging along in their flowing robes seem like giant trees walking.

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What a scene must have been presented by the prophet figures as "they two stood by the Jordan." Having pierced the tangled underbrush that makes the shores of this little stream like a ribbon of green for miles when looked upon from barren wilderness heights, the two friends tarried. Willows, cane, tamarisk, poplars made comforting shade for their throbbing heads and pleasant relief for their eyes, taunted by desert-mirages and baffling dunes crossed between Jericho and the Jordan. I like to think that the two men walked, as did we, in the tangled bower along the shores of the stream whose banks are steep but low and certainly at that point, were anything but "stormy." Never is one tempted to stoop and drink from Jordan waters. So muddy they become in their swift descent from Hermon snows to salt Dead Sea, that one cannot blame the Syrian commander, Naaman, for angrily refusing to wash away his leprosy when commanded by Elisha to dip seven times in the Jordan. How could flesh "come clean" from such ugly brown waters? Little wonder he turned in rage, demanding if the clear waters of his native Damascus were not "better than all the waters of Israel "

ON JORDAN'S BANKS

Locusts in a strident orchestra were chirping along the Jordan with the dry sound of many little electric sparks—the only interruption of the valley stillness. "Bruised reeds" and asparaguslike undergrowth caught

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the light breeze and suggested Christ's words, "What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind?" Too narrow are the waters to make a roar—so narrow that one can readily imagine the two prophets walking across to the farther shore, and Eli-sha returning alone, smiting the stream with the mantle he had caught from the disappearing Elijah. Travel-ers to-day who like to retrace the prophets' steps row across the Jordan in a few moments.

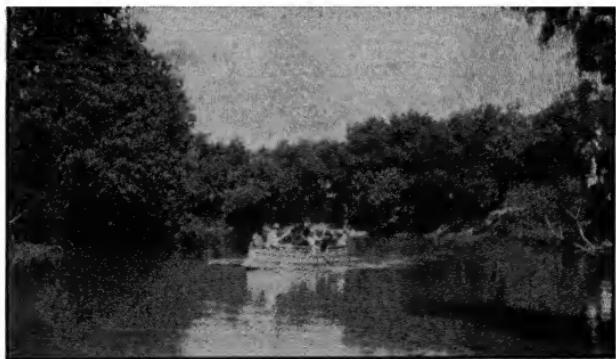
Whatever one believes was the site of the Israelites' crossing, the modern "Pilgrims' Bathing Place" carries conviction as being like the spot to which Jesus came for baptism, as he followed the Jordan route down from Nazareth, rather than the road of prejudice through unfriendly Samaria. The proximity of the natural route from Jordan to Jerusalem and of the Quarantana, the traditional mount of temptation to which he went after his baptism, give satisfaction to the thousands of pilgrims who come each year for baptism, to this "Makhadet Majleh."

Since the fourth century, pilgrims have been carrying away inspiration from this point of Jordan's descent from life-giving Hermon in Galilee to the sterile "Sea of Lot." On both sides of the stream at the Feast of Epiphany Greek worshipers encamp. Standing in the Jordan the Greek Bishop prays and dips his cross in the historic stream. All who wish to be baptized come down and plunge their robes in the water which will be allowed to hallow them until used again, for burial.

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But impressive as are all these historic associations, the Jordan for us will always be linked in a personal way with a twelve-year-old American lad from Kentucky who was so stirred by his impressions of the land where Jesus lived that he asked his Methodist father to allow him to be immersed in the Jordan. To this boy the baptism of Jesus became very real.

Between him and the little bronzed Bedouin at the Sea of Death a rushing torrent of Christianity flowed. Jordan water flows by *their* very tent-door. But it has no sacramental value for them. They know nothing of the God "that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."



CHAPTER XV

THE STORY-TELLER

"And they went away into the city and told everything."

OUR four Arab friends with heads together in the doorway of a Jerusalem shop have just come into the city craving news. So intent are they upon learning the latest gossip of Zion's Rialto that none of them has even seen us or heard the click of our kodak.

The tongue of the East has always wagged. The theater and the motion picture, the ball-game and the musicale have not yet scrapped the art of conversation here. A Western host thinks he compliments a guest when he invites him to the opera. To an Oriental host this would be courtesy. One must *talk* and *let talk*.

Not only of Athens but of every place east of Athens, citizens and "strangers sojourning there [spend] their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing." In villages of Galilee and in cities of Judah "they who sit in the gates, talk." The East keeps no secrets.

The coffee-house idlers on the roadside at Jenîn, in Sidon and in such villages as little Tûr on the crest of



SPREADING THE NEWS

THE STORY-TELLER

Olivet, have no late editions of the press for their edification. Although more newspapers are now making their appearance in Jerusalem, I cannot recall having seen a single sheet of newsprint or a single newsboy in her streets during our stay there.

In just such a group as our four communicative Arabs we see the process by which Jesus' message was published throughout his land with a rapidity which alarmed the Pharisees and Herodians. The news of his strange words and iconoclastic teachings spread with the magic of invisible wings. This was the real mystery of "tongues." For having himself felt the charm of his mother's reminiscences, about the gorgeous pilgrims from realms east of Moab, and of their hasty flight by night into the land of Egypt, he understood his own people's susceptibility to stories. He well knew that after he had made them comfortable on a cool mountain slope and had fed them, they would be ready to give concentrated attention while he opened out treasures from his store of truth.

And when his enemies at last tried to trump up an indictment against him, their simple scheme was to "ensnare him in his talk." Little did they count on his skill at repartee, which outwitted them in their own riddle of the denarius. "And when they heard it, they marveled, and left him, and went away."

"THE WHISPERING GALLERY"

This tendency of the people to spread news was capi-

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talized during Colonel Lawrence's spectacular work of swinging Arab tribes around from loyalty to the Turks to allegiance to Great Britain. When he wished to mislead the enemy about the point of attack, he simply whispered information among his Arabs, and in no time at all, the story was in the camp of the enemy and their attention turned to a center which Lawrence had no notion of bombarding, while the real danger point was left ungarded and free for another victory for the Arab allies of General Allenby.

The rapidity with which rumors spread among the students from many Moslem countries at the El Azhar University in Cairo explains the mystery of Pan-Islamic aspirations. The whole of the Levant is a whispering gallery.

THE PURPOSEFUL TALES OF CHRIST

Many of the current tales which float about through Asia Minor are mere wisps of nonsense which the natives delight to mouth. Such, for example, is their explanation of why the man who smokes a "nargileh," or hubble-bubble pipe, with its long hose attached to a jug of water, will never have gray hairs, be molested by dogs, or attacked by robbers. He will never have gray hairs, say the Easterners, because he will not live long enough; dogs will not bark at him because he will be compelled to walk with a staff; and robbers will not break into his house because the man who smokes a "nargileh" will lie awake at night!

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But how definitely purposeful were the stories of Christ! His faithful chroniclers make this clear. As Luke records, "he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray." It was because they were nearing Jerusalem and expecting the kingdom to be imminent that Jesus related to the disciples the parable of the pounds. He made it clear that his reason for telling the story of the two men who went into the temple to pray was because they trusted in themselves.

Christ was perfectly familiar with the inability of his countrymen to keep any news to themselves—especially good news. It was because of their communicative temperament that often he was compelled to charge his beneficiaries sternly, "See thou say nothing to any man," lest the multitude press upon him. But this was asking too much self-control. Men "went out, and began to publish it much, and to spread abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter." Regardless of his wish about the Gerasene demoniac, the impetuous swineherds "went away into the city and told everything."

It was the direct result of his effective story-telling that precipitated the dark incidents of his last week in Jerusalem—incidents which became very real to us one afternoon, when walking along outside the Zion Gate. Coming to the Hill of Evil Counsel, we discovered a group of Hebrews sitting on the brow of this dusty

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ridge above the Valley of Hinnom plotting plans together. They were perhaps discussing nothing more dangerous than our four veiled Arab friends were, but we instinctively recoiled as we thought of Caiaphas coming to just such a group to inquire how he might accomplish the death of Jesus. We thought, too, of Judas and the chief priests counseling about buying with the blood-money of Christ the potter's field not far from where we were standing, if we may credit the record of as early an historian as Jerome.

STORY-TELLING CHRISTIANS

The book of Acts is simply the account of that story-telling which spread the gospel, so that the "word of the Lord was spread throughout the whole region." At Antioch "almost the whole city was gathered together" to hear Paul's story of the Saviour. At the riverside of Philippi, where pious Jewish women congregated, it was his story which changed the life of Lydia. And when he returned to Jerusalem from an early preaching tour they "rehearsed one by one the things which God had brought among the Gentiles through his ministry" and they heard his story gladly and glorified God.

Contrast with such scenes as these the ludicrous tragedy which followed Herod's efforts at story-telling, when he "arrayed himself in royal apparel, and sat on the throne, and made an oration unto them, and the people shouted, saying, 'The voice of a god, and not of a man.'"

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OLD TESTAMENT TALES

Christ found plenty of precedent for his story-telling method in the chroniclers of old into whose wisdom he dipped. The picturesque Genesis narratives which we all love show every evidence of having first been circulated from mouth to mouth before being reduced to writing. And in the Exodus we have many marks of Moses the story-teller, who outlined carefully the tradition which the children of Israel were to tell their sons when they asked at Passover time, "What is the meaning of all this ceremony?" "Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt. . . . And thou shalt tell thy son . . . with a strong hand hath Jehovah brought thee out of Egypt."

How these pilgrims of the long desert trek must have shortened their marches by recounting not only the borrowed lore of the Egyptians but also the details of their own picturesque deliverance when locusts brought in by the east wind ate up "every herb of the land," when thick darkness descended; and "hail broke every tree of the field." And what heroic tales of their own patriarchs they must have told and retold to little ones at their tent doors—of Joseph's bondage in Egypt, his spectacular rise to power, and his broad-spirited charity toward his aged father and his hateful brothers.

By more bonds than her "pleasant things of silver" did Egypt possess the children of Israel. The story-telling atmosphere which later added its share to the "Thousand and One Nights" of Persia and Bagdad

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could not have been without effect upon tribes who for generations were exposed to it.

A STORY-TELLER ON THE NILE

It was our good fortune in Cairo to come upon an Egyptian who was quite as voluble as the famous Sheherazade of "Arabian Nights," whose ability as a story-teller was so great that the Sultan refrained from putting her to death as long as she could spin another chapter to her tales of the Genie and the Merchant and of Sindbad the Sailor.

We had embarked in a little white-winged Nile "flukah" for a late afternoon sail upstream from Cairo. From its canvas canopy dangled decorative bunches of dates, just then coming into season—mahogany dates, amber dates, and red. Green figs too, a reed basket of cakes and a graceful water-jug of green clay hung above our heads as we swung out into the rapid, muddy, but broad-breasted stream. Our sole sailor was a nimble old boatman who looked more like a little bronze gorilla than a human being. His bare heels were as cracked and calloused as the hot Nile mud. If he had a voice he did not use it throughout our sail. Yet he sprang dexterously from the tiller at the stern of the "flukah" to her single pole near the bow. He could count on no help from our gentlemanly dragoman, Abdul, who had come aboard that afternoon attired in his newest robe and fez, with a suspicion that we might wish to photograph him.

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The sun, like a huge red-gold coin, was falling toward the fringe of the Nile with lacy date palms traced enchantingly across its face in a design which King Fuad might well adopt as the currency of his realm.

"At sunset on the Nile," said Abdul, authoritatively, "all nature is quite silent for the space of two minutes."

We listened and strangely enough, that valley of life was hushed as the great gold coin disappeared and a bold flash of crimson afterglow shot across the bosom of the river. Then came a singular white radiance which silvered the luxuriant banks with an unearthly beauty.

Against this luminous screen of sky, pictures of Egypt were constantly floating by: hundred-foot palms like soaring minarets and rural scenes such as Moslem peasants appliquéd on pillow tops and panels. More "flu-kahs," dainty as birds; flat-roofed, comfortable house-boats which made us long for a real Nile cruise in winter; and a hideous coal barge, just starting on a fifteen-day sail to Assuan, with black-veiled Moslem women sitting atop the coal pile. From the two superb minarets of the Citadel in the heart of Cairo, where British friction is most noticeable to the native, two flags were waving in the breeze. At the desert's edge loomed the strange sight of ridgy hills, from which ancient builders may have quarried stone for their pyramids. Then, the private yacht of a wealthy Egyptian landowner, with the new green and white flag of Egypt at her stern. Modern white houses set safely

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back from the river among comely groves of fruit trees—modest estates which Abdul informed us could be bought for fifteen thousand dollars; and one-story villas with a third of an acre of orchard, for three thousand dollars—with servants available at two dollars per month!

In the midst of all this floating panorama of Nile loveliness at sunset, Abdul seated himself imposingly on the prow of the boat facing us and asked, "Well, now, shall I tell you a story?"

And the voice of Egypt began:

"Once upon a time there was a princess, a beautiful, unfortunate Egyptian princess. Her name was *Aïda*."

Could we have wished for any tale half so appropriate? "*Aïda*" told by an Egyptian in the ancient homeland of the tale that inspired the great music of Verdi, which the world first heard in Cairo!

But "*Aïda*" was only the beginning. We were regaled all the rest of the way with accounts of fascinating Mr. Ti, whose fifth dynasty tomb we were to see on the morrow, when we would go to the burial place of the sacred bulls on the desert of Sakkara.

"Mr. Ti's tomb is the happiest one in Egypt," declared Abdul. "You see, he was no royal son, but the successful architect and taxgatherer of a king. Therefore we shall not see the serpent of royalty on him. But, oh, those other things in the friezes in his Mastaba! Nowhere in Egypt will you see reliefs more lifelike. You will behold Mrs. Ti, much smaller than her hus-

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band, clasping his knees in servile affection: You will see assistants bringing in the taxes in the form of geese, oxen, sheaves of corn. Men are there crackling corn, loading it on little donkeys, who are waiting in rows to receive their burden just as they do to-day. You will see a mother cow being milked by a man who has trouble in keeping her calf away; and a fish net, out in watery waves, and water-buffalo walking in the river—all this in bas-relief, mind you. And you will see women slaves bringing gifts to the queen; and marvelously graceful dancers with arched feet and pointed toes and hands clasped above their heads—it is all a wonderful *story* in plaster, of things which happened four thousand years ago.

“At Memphis too you shall read stories in stone and alabaster. Of this old-time capital of Egypt you shall see nothing but a few camels and cattle grazing under the palm trees, and a horde of half-naked children running out to sell you faded mummy beads. But you will remember that great processions marched from here between two rows of five hundred sphinxes, each, to bury the sacred bulls in the Tombs of Apis, where their huge granite sarcophagi remain. To-day only one little sphinx of Memphis remains, but it is of alabaster.

“And you will see there a huge Rameses II in stone, lying flat on his back in the sands, with his thick lips smiling up at the stars of his Egypt, with jeweled fists clenched. One feather he wears in his crown is for upper Egypt and one for Lower. Very different this

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strong Rameses looks, even though he is fallen, compared to his shriveled little mummy we saw in Cairo Museum yesterday.

"But the strangest thing you will see at Memphis is the stela on which Ptah Hotep caused his advice to his son to be carved. Some day I shall write it for you on paper and send it to you in America."

And this is Abdul's translation of this great story in stone just as he sent it to us. The original deserves to be classed with the words of Lord Chesterfield and of Polonius' advice to Laertes:

THE ADVICE OF PTAH HOTEPE

To the old after there youthes and to the rich after their poornice. if you become a wealthy man after your poornice think that God has gave it to you. And do not be broud. treet Poor People the same you want others to treet you when you was poor, and try to be a will known man, and if by that, you be came a respicted man, and travilled in earth, and got married prepare your self a nice house, and be kind to your wife and addorned her and not be a wilde Peast to her. And make her smill the sandlewood to have her in a good shape. you youthes a day will Come that makes you idle, cannot open your eyes, cannot year, cannot open your arms and not to do a little motion. and here is my advice to the youthes and to the wealthy.

Not a bad bit of advice, from a patriarch of four thousand years ago! Even in Abdul's translation.

By the time Abdul had added some tales of current happenings—the great unpleasantness in Cairo because

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the prince of Mecca had rejected the Sacred Carpet sent a short time before to the tomb of Mohammed; young Egypt's desire to manufacture her own cotton instead of shipping the raw product to England; her longing to make her own electric light from Nile power rather than by English coal; and to run her own museum rather than take American money for the same—we were at our landing dock.

Yet there was still one question we wanted to put to Abdul.

"As a good Moslem, Abdul, would you mind telling us just what you believe?"

But this fellow, who was so well informed about his country and current political driftings, could do nothing more than give a trite recital about "one Allah; many prophets, Mohammed the greatest; alms, ablutions, and prayer." It was just an automatic textbook response, without any depth of understanding or personal conviction.

It is not the quality of the story she has to tell, but her universal readiness to repeat it, in the rug bazaars, along caravan routes or in the street, that has enabled Islam to fling her faith across the world. There is no comparison, even on the mere story basis, between Luke's beautiful chronicle of the Christ-child adored by Shepherds and sought by travelers from afar, and the tale of the camel-driver of the widow Khadijah.

Where did Islam come by her plan for spreading her faith? By taking the kernel of Christ's own method,

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applying it and letting it work out its own harvest of result—more than two hundred million converts.

Christ's good news is still the world's most moving tale. In *printed* form, it still outsells all others.

But have we forgotten the charm of his *spoken* original?

THE TELLER OF TALES

How was the faith of Islam spread
From Spain to India's water-shed?
By telling the tale a thousand times,
By weaving the tale in a thousand rimes,
By bearing the tale to a thousand climes;
Father to son and son to son,
Trader and merchant, peasant and peer,
Neighbor to neighbor bending the ear.

So must the faith of Christ be told
Wherever the goods of the world are sold,
Brother to brother, all stressing the love
No other prophet has brought from above.
Till intimate touch of tenderest seer,
Reaches the noisiest skeptic's ear,
Christian and doubter, agnostic and saint
Mingling unconscious of any restraint.
Then will the faith of Christ be spread
Till hungering souls at last find bread.

The East has given the tale to tell—
Ours be the task to tell it well.

